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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 26 May 2021


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## WEDNESDAY, 26 MAY 2021

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 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.


### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Sunshine Coast Grammar School in the electorate of Ninderry and Fairholme College Toowoomba in the electorate of Toowoomba North.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


#### Coronavirus, Update

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.31 am): In terms of our daily COVID update, today I can confirm that we have no cases of community transfer in Queensland. We have one new case which was overseas acquired and detected in hotel quarantine. We have 16 active cases. In the past 24 hours we have done 8,096 tests. In the past 24 hours there have been 5,501 vaccines and the total number of vaccines administered to date is 198,598.

The Chief Health Officer has declared the Victorian City of Whittlesea a hotspot. This follows the discovery of nine cases. As of 1 am today anyone who has been in the Whittlesea local government area will have to go into hotel quarantine. As of 1 am tomorrow, everyone arriving from Victoria will be required to complete a border pass. Further restrictions are detailed on the Queensland Health website.

Mr Speaker, this outbreak shows that this pandemic is far from over. Our best defence remains the same as it ever was: maintain social distancing, keep up good hand hygiene, if you are sick stay home, and get tested.

#### Callide C Power Station, Fire

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): Yesterday we confronted something that has never happened before: an explosion and major fire in a power station.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is not a laughing matter. Shortly before 2 pm yesterday, 219 staff from the Callide C plant were evacuated quickly and safely. Thankfully, no-one was hurt, Leader of the Opposition. The three-person firefighting team based at the plant took on the blaze before 25 firefighters—

**Mr Bleijie:** Disgraceful.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will start again, Mr Speaker. They are laughing about this—laughing.

**Mr Bleijie:** Wasn't even talking about that.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kawana!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Laughing!

**Mr SPEAKER:** We might hit the reset button, members. I will not tolerate that kind of banter across the chamber. One member has the call and it is the Premier. Premier, please continue.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The three-person firefighting team based at the plant took on the blaze before 25 firefighters in five appliances raced from the surrounding districts to back them up. Together, they had the blaze under control in a matter of hours and the plant has now been handed back to the operators.


I want to thank those workers and firefighters for doing such a fantastic job ensuring everyone got out safely—that is, after all, the most important thing. Such a sudden and massive loss of supply triggered a domino effect across the energy grid, cutting power to more than 400,000 homes and businesses across the state.

In a further testament to the skills and dedication of our energy workers, most of those customers had their power restored quickly. It was feared that the demands of peak electricity usage as people returned to their homes after work and school would put further strain on the system resulting in load shedding. I am pleased to report, as I have been advised by the minister, that this load shedding was not required. Queenslanders answered the call. This is such a magnificent state, filled with such magnificent people that all we had to do was ask them to conserve their electricity—and they did.

Queensland exports its excess energy to southern states from Australia's youngest fleet of generators. It is the people of Queensland who profit because these energy assets belong to the people of Queensland, resulting in \$300 in dividends paid to Queensland electricity users in just the past two years. When it is safe, investigations can begin on what caused the fire. The energy minister will provide further detail shortly, but I also want to pay tribute to him and his team for their work addressing this unprecedented event last night.

Callide is one of our youngest power stations. Callide C was built in 2001. I am advised damage is limited and we expect it to return to full service. Our power network could barely have faced a tougher test, and I am proud of the way it responded.

### National Sorry Day

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): Today is National Sorry Day—26 May. It is a day to reflect on the hurt and suffering of the stolen generations. The day has been recognised since 1998, the first anniversary of the tabling of the final report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families—more commonly known as the *Bringing them home* report.


On this day we acknowledge the wrongs of the past and the profound grief, suffering and loss caused by the removal of those children. This House issued a formal apology in 1999. A national apology was made in 2008. As sincere as they were, it is important that those apologies are not one-off events. So today we reiterate our sorrow for the hurt of the past.

Our government continues to support members of the stolen generations through the work of the community and personal history unit to connect to their families and their country. I also acknowledge community organisations like Link-Up, who hosted the annual Sorry Day breakfast at Orleigh Park at West End this morning. The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships attended this event to acknowledge those taken away. Orleigh Park is the site of the former Cranbrook home for Aboriginal girls and young women who were removed from their families and sent out to work as domestics.

Steps to real change also include our Path to Treaty and the Local Thriving Communities program. Path to Treaty began with an Eminent Panel. It continues with the Treaty Advancement Committee moving toward consideration later this year. The Local Thriving Communities reform gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities a greater say in their future.

Other important initiatives include our Ministerial and Government Champions Program, which connects remote and discrete communities with ministers and key decision-makers in government. Also, we have our regular phone hook-ups with mayors and our cabinet meeting with the mayors of Indigenous communities. Of course we have a whole-of-government Reconciliation Action Plan. Tomorrow is the start of National Reconciliation Week when the minister will have more to say. National Sorry Day serves as a reminder to us all. We must continue to acknowledge and reflect on the wrongs of the past to support the process of healing and recovery and move forward together.

**Edwards, Hon. Sir LR, AC**


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): Mr Speaker, we have just received the sad news that another great servant of our state, Sir Llew Edwards, has passed away. As an eminent former member, Sir Llew's passing will be acknowledged formally by this House at a future time. I take the opportunity today to express my thanks for his service on behalf of Queenslanders and to offer my condolences to Lady Jane and the Edwards family.

Sir Llew had a long and distinguished parliamentary career as the member for Ipswich, as health minister, as treasurer, as Liberal Party leader and as deputy premier for 11 years from 1972 to 1983. During those often tumultuous years he was a calm and reasonable voice. He was a dignified figure amid the noise and extremes of the more outlandish personalities who inhabited politics at that time.

In his early years Sir Llew began work as an electrician and then studied medicine, working as a doctor at the Ipswich Hospital and at his practice at Raceview. Then came his decade of parliamentary service, after which Sir Llew embraced the role that perhaps defined him best in our memories. As chairman of the enormously successful World Expo 88, he led one of the greatest events our state has ever held—an event which helped define our sense of what we can and should achieve as Queenslanders. Expo under Sir Llew give us a legacy of optimism and confidence that remains with us to this day as we look hopefully towards hosting the world again with the Olympics here in 2032.

We will all have an opportunity to say more when the time comes to remember Sir Llew formally in this House, but twice now this week we have been reminded of the quality of those who devoted their lives to public service in Queensland. Like Ian Brusasco, of whom I spoke yesterday, Sir Llew Edwards had an extraordinarily varied career from medicine, to politics, to business. Sir Llew too was officially named a Queensland Great and awarded an Order of Australia. He was respected across the political divide. Our state is the better for his life and the poorer for his loss.

**Exports**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.40 am): Queensland exporters are critical to our economy and our economic recovery. They support one in five Queensland jobs, with 40 per cent of the more than 7,400 goods exporters based in regional Queensland. Despite many setbacks due to the global pandemic, our exporters have risen to the challenge and adapted. With the ongoing support of my government many have created new markets and even new products. I continue to be impressed by their optimism, perseverance and resilience.

Opmantek has sold its software-monitoring technology to NASA for use in its Artemis mission which it hopes will see the next humans land on the moon in 2024, including the first woman. Opmantek is now exporting software to 130,000 companies in 178 countries. It is among 44 Queensland companies that, I can announce today, will share in nearly \$1 million from the second round of Trade and Investment Queensland's Go Global Export grants program. This program is just one of the ways my government is supporting our exporters.


Our current month-long Taste of Queensland initiative is seeing more than 60 Queensland exporters introduced via a virtual trade fair to 12 Asian markets. In the last two years the Taste of Queensland program has generated \$10 million in sales. In addition, we will soon open trade and investment offices in Vietnam and Germany to tap into these lucrative markets, adding to our new presence in New Zealand.

I wish to update the House on the return of our prestigious export awards, which celebrate the achievements of Queensland exporters. Unfortunately, the awards were cancelled last year due to COVID. Entries for the 31st year will open in coming weeks, with the winners to be announced in October. Winners will then be in the running to become a national export champion.

The current reigning Australian Exporter of the Year 2019 is Queensland firm Populous, one of the largest architectural firms in the world, which generates around 80 per cent of its income from exports. Today members of the public will have a chance to catch up with Populous and other Queensland exporters on the River Deck here at Parliament House to launch the awards. Exporters include: Nutrafruit of Yeerongpilly, which exports probiotic products from Queensland's own Queen Garnet super plum; NOJA Power, which exports switchgear from their Murarrie base; 4 Hearts Brewing in Ipswich; and Gold Coast's Sobah, an exporter of non-alcoholic beer—very interesting. I encourage all members of parliament to come along to this event, which will be held between 12 and one o'clock.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Drink responsibly.


## Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.42 am): The Premier and the Minister for Sport are hard at work to secure the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games. If Brisbane is successful, it will ensure a 10-year pipeline of construction industry jobs, trade and investment opportunities, and legacy projects that will benefit Queenslanders for decades to come. Perhaps most importantly, it will align all levels of government in the south-east working towards the same plan and objective.

Thanks to our infrastructure investments, the region is already on track to have much of the infrastructure we will need. That means ticketholders will be able to get to venues and around the region with ease thanks to major projects such as Cross River Rail. In fact, our investment in the \$5.4 billion Cross River Rail will transform the region, with three new inner-city stations and associated new precincts being constructed. With the population in the south-east forecast to grow from 3.5 million to 4.9 million people in 2036, better transport connectivity is crucial to link these high-growth residential and employment areas. This government's forward thinking and investment in Brisbane has led the delivery of such infrastructure.

We are planning for infrastructure not just in Brisbane but also throughout the state. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning has begun developing a new State Infrastructure Strategy, which will be supported by seven regional infrastructure plans to further strengthen and catalyse regional economic recovery and infrastructure planning and delivery. The new State Infrastructure Strategy will provide a long-term vision to drive growth, attract private sector investment and create jobs for Queenslanders. The strategy will discuss the important role of investment in both economic and social infrastructure in building community resilience. The regional infrastructure plans will recognise the important role infrastructure plays in regional economic recovery, resilience, growth and livability. These will be developed to reflect each region's unique strengths and opportunities to help identify and prioritise regionally significant infrastructure needs. A series of workshops is currently being held around the state to inform these plans. Brisbane is the place to be now, in 2032 and well beyond.

## Electricity Network

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.45 am): Yesterday Queensland's electricity network experienced one of the most significant events in its history. Our greatest thanks is that there has been no injury to any of the employees or contractors at the Callide power station. The loss of supply from an entire 1.5 gigawatt power station in just 21 minutes is unprecedented—a word we have had cause to use so often since the start of 2020.


To protect the integrity of the network in Central Queensland, supply from Gladstone, Stanwell and Yarwun power stations was also taken offline, meaning a loss of 2,300 megawatts which affected 440,000 households across the state. After interruptions to supply across much of the system yesterday afternoon, there was no further loss of supply during last night's peak and our system is gradually recovering, as it is designed to.

Queensland's electricity network is designed to deal with interruptions. More than any other state our population is exposed to the risks of outages, particularly through natural disasters. The ability to be agile, to adapt and adjust is built into the design of our publically owned energy companies from generation to transmission and distribution. The resilience that is built into that system is not gold plating, as some would put it, but an investment in ensuring the reliability of our energy supply.

Yesterday's event caused disruption and inconvenience across the state, and I thank Queenslanders for their patience and understanding. A significant burden was placed on some of our large commercial and industrial customers, including the Boyne aluminium smelter. As Treasurer, I express my gratitude to all of those large employers for their cooperation during this unprecedented event.

Beyond those heavy industrial customers, preliminary advice suggests the economic impact is relatively contained, especially for an event of this magnitude. Energex and Ergon Energy have established processes for customers who experience damage as a result of an event like this which affects the electricity network. While assessments continue into the damage at Callide, Queenslanders can be assured that our publicly owned energy system remains the strongest in the nation.

### Callide C Power Station, Fire

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.47 am): As I reported to the House yesterday afternoon and as we have heard this morning, at 1.44 pm yesterday a fire broke out at unit C4 at Callide C Power Station, resulting in the workforce being evacuated. The 219 workers at the Callide C Power Station were evacuated, and their ongoing safety remains our No. 1 priority. As we have heard, I am pleased to confirm there were no injuries and all of the workforce is safe and accounted for. I want to join with others and thank all of them for their tremendous efforts not only yesterday but every day to provide safe and reliable power to Queensland.


Queensland's generation assets at Callide and across our network and the workforce that operate them are critically important to our energy system. This morning I spoke with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner, who advised that they handed over the site to senior management at around midnight last night. Work is now underway to investigate the cause of the incident. I have also spoken with, and received advice from, senior power station management this morning that, fortunately, most of the damage has been contained to that one unit with the three others apparently in good condition. That means we will work to bring the remaining units back on once it is safe to do so. It will likely require the replacement of turbine No. 4.

As we have heard, the electricity system is designed to protect itself from further damage in unprecedented events like this which is why more than 400,000 Queensland households and businesses lost power yesterday afternoon after multiple assets tripped at approximately 2.06 pm. Importantly, the state's critical infrastructure remained operational due to emergency backup plans. More than 300,000 homes and businesses had their power restored within just a short period. By 4.30 pm the number without power had reduced to fewer than 10,000. I too want to thank the staff at our government owned corporations Powerlink and Energy Queensland and all the generators for their tremendous effort restoring power so quickly.

Yesterday officials from the Australian Energy Market Operator advised that Queensland may not have had enough supply to match demand during the peak evening period. In response, Queensland generators, including our publicly owned Wivenhoe pumped storage and Swanbank E, did their job. They came online and provided more critical supply to the network. Additionally, we asked Queenslanders to conserve their energy use during the evening, and once again Queenslanders pulled together and Queenslanders came through. I join with the Premier and the Treasurer in thanking all Queenslanders for playing their part in helping to stabilise our network and ensure there were no further outages. I can confirm that actions taken last night will ensure electricity supply continues to exceed demand. The Australian Energy Market Operator has forecast sufficient supply going forward. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and update Queenslanders of any changes.

This incident shows that unforeseen events can happen anywhere and can have a cascading effect across the electricity system. However, they also show that both the amount and diversity of capacity we have in the Queensland system have allowed us to respond to such an unprecedented event. In fact, it was the diversity of our fleet, especially our important pumped hydro, that kept the system in balance last night and will ensure supply remains stable. I want to once again thank our frontline energy workers. I also want to extend our thanks to the firies who joined the onsite firefighting team to respond to the incident. I again thank all Queenslanders who played their part to conserve energy when needed last night. You all did a terrific job working together, which is what Queenslanders do best. Thanks for helping us get the lights back on quickly and keeping them on.

### Kindergarten

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): I join the minister and the Premier in acknowledging that no workers were injured at that Callide incident yesterday, which is very good news.


The Palaszczuk government is delivering our \$12 million election commitment to expand our remote kindergarten in schools initiative to 20 more schools. Our commitment will deliver remote kindies operating next year in 20 more schools—from Mount Garnet in the Far North to Thallon near the New South Wales border. This will involve additional infrastructure and staffing in regional and remote Queensland—all part of Queensland's economic recovery plan. That means more kindergarten-aged kids in rural and remote Queensland communities will be able to go to face-to-face kindy for the first time. We know the benefits that flow from kindergarten in giving our kids a great start. Kindy helps

improve children's literacy and numeracy skills and social skills and prepares them for school. All the research shows the benefits that flow later in life in terms of improved school results and better health and employment prospects.

The Palaszczuk government started remote kindies in 2016 at 38 schools, and this year 69 rural and remote state schools are kindy-ready. More than 800 Queensland children have attended remote kindy statewide since it started, including nearly 170 currently registered. These kindies were established in schools where there was no other kindy service within a 50-kilometre radius and this has now been reduced to 40 kilometres. That means more kids can access quality kindy no matter where they live in Queensland. I know the Isolated Children's Parents' Association supports remote kindy for our rural and remote families, and I recently met with the ICPA president, Louise Martin.

Remote kindy is for kids like Harriet Abell at Tambo, four hours west of Roma. Harriet's mum, Carroll Abell, is a big supporter of remote kindy after seeing the difference the Tambo State School remote kindy has made to Harriet. She says kindy has helped Harriet become familiar with the school, the expectations of being in a learning environment and, most importantly, having to listen to someone other than her mum. The 20 new schools comprise five in Central Queensland, three in the Burnett region, nine in the Darling Downs and south-west, and three up north. This is what Labor governments do—invest in our future, invest in the services that support families and build communities, no matter where they are in the state.

### Coronavirus, Update

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): I also want to acknowledge the tremendous work of our hospital and ambulance staff in relation to the Callide power station. The work they did to immediately respond in preparation for a potential mass casualty event was extraordinary. I am so pleased there were no injuries. I want to acknowledge the great work that was done by the health workers.

Queensland's COVID response has always been and always will be based on expert health advice. It is this expert advice of the Chief Health Officer which has kept Queenslanders safe throughout the deadly worldwide pandemic, which has claimed, sadly, more than 3.4 million lives, and that number continues to increase. In response to nine new cases—and I am hearing there could potentially be 10, but I understand Victoria is doing a press conference now and there may be an additional five cases reported in Greater Melbourne—Queensland Health has declared the City of Whittlesea local government area in Melbourne's north a COVID-19 hotspot.

As a result the following new measures have been put in place as outlined by the Premier. From 1 am today, anyone arriving in Queensland who has been in the City of Whittlesea local government area since 11 May will go into hotel quarantine. From 1 am tomorrow, Thursday, 27 May, everyone arriving from Victoria will be required to complete a border pass. Any of those arrivals who have been in the City of Whittlesea local government area since 11 May and are a nonresident will be turned away unless they have an exemption to enter the state. Queensland residents or those given an exemption to enter the state will go into hotel quarantine. This is in addition to measures already put in place by Queensland Health which meant that from 1 am today anyone who has been in a declared venue of concern associated with the Victorian outbreak will be placed in hotel quarantine unless they have an exemption.

As of this morning, I can advise the number of public exposure sites in tier 1 and tier 2 in Victoria now sits at 47 sites. I remind anyone in Queensland currently who has been in Victoria over the last two weeks to please keep checking this site to see if you have been to a public exposure site. Even if you have not been to a public exposure site, if you have been to Victoria and you have any symptoms whatsoever, no matter how mild, please come forward and get tested.

Restrictions will also apply to the state's prisons, aged-care facilities, disability accommodation services and hospitals. From 1 am today, anyone who has been in the Greater Melbourne area on or after 11 May cannot enter these facilities unless 14 days have passed since they were there. Exemptions can be requested on compassionate grounds. Anyone who has been to a declared COVID exposure site in Victoria during the risk period is reminded to get tested and quarantine. Anyone who is planning to visit Victoria, in particular Greater Melbourne, should reconsider their need to travel at this time.


We wish all Melbournians and all Victorians the very best as they work to contain this latest outbreak. We will continue to follow the advice of the Chief Health Officer in our COVID response—an approach which has kept Queenslanders safe throughout this deadly pandemic. Based on the Victorian



update, I will be seeking a briefing from the Chief Health Officer after question time. I also know that she will be meeting with AHPPC and her colleagues across the country again today to talk about what responses should happen in relation to the latest information.

I want to thank everyone in Queensland who has come forward to get tested. There have been 8,096 tests in the last 24 hours. Please keep this up. I also want to thank our vaccination staff because our daily vaccination rate has doubled since last Wednesday. I thank all of our staff who are working very hard to get more vaccines into more arms. We are going to keep seeing those numbers increasing over the coming weeks and months.

### **Investing in Queensland Women; National Sorry Day**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.58 am): In February this year I was pleased to announce the release of a new grant program to support community groups to advance gender equality. The Investing in Queensland Women program will provide \$540,000 through two rounds of funding each year, with grants of up to \$15,000 available to support community initiatives that help address issues that affect women's status and roles in our community and restrict women's full participation in the economic, social and cultural opportunities that Queensland offers.


Today I am very pleased to announce that \$270,000 will be distributed through the inaugural Investing in Queensland Women grant round for 32 projects. These projects will be delivered from Kubin on Moa Island in the Torres Strait and Normanton in the gulf to Southport on the Gold Coast. They include initiatives focusing on domestic and family violence prevention, sexual violence prevention, healthy relationships, women's health, and women's leadership and mentoring. The funding is going to groups like the Queensland Farmers' Federation to support the financial security of farm business women through business and transition planning; the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation to develop resources that will help communities and workplaces to recognise and respond to the unique and often complex experiences of domestic and family violence for LGBTQ people; and the Tech Girls Movement to establish five clubs around Queensland as safe spaces for girls to learn about computing and to engage in STEM.

The funding is supporting projects to be delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people with a disability; LGBTQ people; people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; people living in rural, regional and remote communities; young people; and older people. I am pleased that such a diverse range of projects will support women from right across Queensland and I look forward to seeing the outcomes.

Earlier in the year I also sat down with Sue and Lloyd Clarke, who talked to me about the work they are doing educating mothers and their daughters around coercive control. Alarmingly, among the initial 30 teenagers they worked with, three identified that their relationships had signs of coercive control. I am pleased that through our Investing in Queensland Women grants they, in partnership with Beyond DV, will also be able to continue this work and help us educate more young people on the dangers of coercive control. I can also announce that applications for round 2 will open on 1 July this year.

While I am on my feet, I also acknowledge National Sorry Day. It is a day when we acknowledge the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were forcibly removed from their families, which we now know as the stolen generations. It is a day of reflection and a day of healing, and as a nation we move forward together by saying sorry.

### **Callide C Power Station, Fire; Community Safety, Jobs**


 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.01 am): I start by commending the work of emergency services personnel for their swift response to yesterday's fire at the Callide power station. A number of crews attended including Fire and Rescue Service firefighters, Rural Fire Service volunteers, State Emergency Service volunteers and police officers. It is heartening to hear that there were no reported injuries and that the fire was contained. I commend all of our frontline officers and first responders for keeping our community safe. They are true community champions, they are skilled and they are dedicated to the communities they serve.

This government is investing in the jobs that support Queensland's economic plan for recovery and we are investing in the jobs that also support community safety. In the biggest boost to community safety in almost 30 years we are delivering an extra 2,025 police personnel, we are delivering an extra

357 firefighters and we are delivering hundreds more custodial officers. I can announce for the first time that the Queensland Police Service is today launching a recruitment campaign for more Policelink call takers. This government made a commitment to deliver 50 additional call takers to boost the capability of the Queensland Police Service, and today they formally invite Queenslanders to seize this opportunity to serve their community. It is part of Queensland's plan for more jobs, economic recovery and enhanced community safety.

Right across community safety, police, corrections and fire and emergency services personnel we are investing in thousands of new jobs, we are investing in Queenslanders and we are investing in community safety.

### Mount Isa Mines Rodeo

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport) (10.03 am): From the coast to the outback, Queensland is home to many world-class visitor experiences. Located more than 1,800 kilometres north-west of Brisbane is the world's biggest city by land mass and the home of the largest and richest rodeo in the Southern Hemisphere. From 12 to 15 August, the iconic Mount Isa Mines Rodeo will mark its 62nd year entertaining the outback. The clock on the official website counts down the days, hours and seconds, such is the anticipation. Already, the rodeo is chasing Outback Queensland's economic recovery with pre-event ticket sales bucking the 2019 trend by 20 per cent.


The Mount Isa rodeo is expected to sling up to \$10 million into the local economy and support local jobs. Like all great events, the Mount Isa Mines Rodeo is adapting to changing expectations to create a fresh visitor experience. For the first time, this year a Brisbane charter flight and glamping package is available. The high-end luxury glamping experience sold out on the first day of tickets going on sale.

As of today, New South Wales rodeo fans have saddled up for 15 per cent of tickets and Victorians are stampeding for 11 per cent to demonstrate the event's national appeal. Along with thousands of visitors in their cowboy-boot best, \$250,000 in prize money will spur hundreds of competitors into town. I am told they will be hungry, putting away 16,000 buckets of hot chips, 13,000 burgers, 9½ thousand pizzas and 6,000 steak sandwiches. They will wash that down with 30,000 beers and, thankfully, 40,000 bottles of water. One of the highlights is the three-day gold pass featuring a star-studded music line-up including Guy Sebastian and Lee Kernaghan.

The Mount Isa Mines Rodeo is part of our commitment to rebuilding better, creating a destination event for locals and visitors to enjoy.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I was going to give you eight seconds more, Minister, but I am glad you finished when you did!

### Agritourism

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.06 am): How's that? What a celebration!

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** Once again we hear the cries of adulation from those opposite!


Agriculture continues to play a key role in delivering Queensland's plan for economic recovery from COVID-19. Producers I have spoken to in the past year have said that, in order to deliver that plan, the agriculture sector needs more opportunities to diversify—diversification into new products, diversification into new markets but also diversification into new industries like agritourism. That is why the Palaszczuk government has \$2 million on the table to help grow agritourism in Queensland. A strong agritourism market helps grow our regions, which ultimately delivers Queensland's plan for economic recovery.

Part of the Palaszczuk government's \$2 million investment is being used to run the 'Taste farm life' campaign, which I launched at Henderson Park Farm Retreat near Rockhampton earlier this month during Beef Australia. We have amazing farms run by excellent producers and we want the rest of Australia to come and see them firsthand. The Palaszczuk government also wants to help the next generation of producers who are thinking about diversifying into agritourism. Last week, we supported 50 farmers from around the state to attend the Farm 2 Plate Exchange conference in the Scenic Rim. The conference brought together farmers and chefs, tourism and hospitality businesses to make valuable connections and discuss opportunities to grow visitor experiences from paddock to plate.

I want to pay tribute to Kay Tommerup, an #eatqld champion, who advocated for those 50 farmers to be supported to go to this conference. Kay runs a very successful agritourism business at her dairy farm in the Scenic Rim and she wants to see the sector grow right around the state, and so does the Palaszczuk government. I was fortunate to attend the Farm 2 Plate Exchange closing dinner last week. I got to meet some of those farmers that we supported like the producers from the Farm 2 Fork Collective in the South Burnett as well as Naomi from Blue River Microgreens and Deb McLucas from Mackay. They told me that, if it were not for our support, they would not have been able to attend this great conference. They are taking home what they have learnt at Farm 2 Plate Exchange to put it into practice. I cannot wait to see what they will do next.

The potential for Queensland's agritourism industry was reflected at that dinner. Everything served that night was grown and produced right there in the Scenic Rim. From local pumpkins and corn to the beef and dairy, the Scenic Rim and its local agritourism industry was very much on show. I know that producers at Farm 2 Plate Exchange have great ideas about how to show off their farms and produce to the rest of Australia. The Palaszczuk government will be standing there shoulder to shoulder with them supporting them every step along the way.

### **Craft Brewers and Artisan Distillers**

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.09 am): Queenslanders have a growing thirst for craft beer and artisan liquor, and so they should. Queensland's craft brewers and artisan distillers are innovative, dynamic, and proudly producing some of the best products in the world. As a strongly emerging part of the economy, they already offer a significant contribution to the state and our regional communities. The thriving industry, and the thousands of local jobs it supports, is set to grow further in Queensland thanks to recent Palaszczuk government reforms.


Since new laws were passed by this parliament on 9 March 2021, a strong contingent of artisan distillers and craft brewers from all corners of Queensland have taken the opportunity to apply for the new artisan producer liquor licence in Queensland. This new licence will increase market access, reduce regulatory burden, support new jobs and give those businesses a much needed boost following COVID-19 trading restrictions. Since the bill was passed, we have received over 72 applications for the new licence. I am pleased to say that 17 of those applications are for brand new businesses, which is great for local jobs.

While we would expect South-East Queensland producers to make up a large portion of applications, it is encouraging to see a number of regional applications as well. Leading the pack is Far North Queensland, with nine per cent; Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday, with seven per cent; followed by Central Queensland, Wide Bay-Burnett and the Darling Downs and south-west region, with three per cent.

We have also established the Artisan Liquor Advisory Group to support ongoing discussions between industry and government. I was pleased to attend the inaugural meeting just a few weeks ago in Brisbane. Queensland is home to approximately 90 craft breweries and 34 artisan distilleries employing over 1,800 people in Queensland, many in our proud regional towns.

When we manufacture locally, we create more long-term and secure jobs for Queenslanders. For our craft brewing and artisan distilling industries, that means jobs in construction, operations, distribution, export and right throughout the manufacturing supply chain. That is something we in Queensland can all raise a glass to.

### **Great Barrier Reef**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.11 am): Queensland is the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef. With it supporting \$6 billion to our economy and 60,000 jobs annually, it is a key driver of the Palaszczuk government's plan for economic recovery. It is why the Premier last week announced the \$7.5 million Work in Paradise package, to encourage thousands of young workers across Australia to take a tourism job in regional hubs like Cairns. It is why since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has invested around \$400 million to protect our reef and create jobs. We know that protecting this World Heritage listed treasure supports our tourism industry, jobs and economic recovery for our regions.


Last week I had the pleasure of hosting the first ever ministerial environmental round table in Far North Queensland, on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef. There I met with environment groups, business and industry to look at ways we can continue to protect our environment and create jobs,

building on the almost \$1 billion investment just this year and building on initiatives such as our new reef vessel that I had the pleasure of launching recently with the member for Gladstone. The new, jointly funded \$9.7 million vessel will act as a floating ranger station, enabling rangers to reach remote locations on the reef. This 24-metre vessel will increase compliance, surveying and research capabilities on the reef to help in the management of protected species and respond to incidents in the region.

I am pleased to advise the House that the Palaszczuk government will now look to build a new barge to join that vessel in protecting our reef and in creating jobs. The new 19-metre catamaran will be a long-range patrol barge designed to load, carry and unload a small excavator, vehicle and up to six tonnes of cargo. Construction will start very soon and be completed by the 2022-23 financial year to play a big role in the ongoing preservation and promotion of the reef.


Alongside this initiative is the \$270 million Reef Water Quality Program, which is supporting jobs in our regions through programs like Reef Assist. We are also working with groups like Greening Australia on projects including the innovative gully project to prevent 8,500 tonnes of fine sediment from reaching the reef every year. Of course, there is our target of net zero emissions by 2050 to make sure our reef can continue to thrive for generations to come. The Palaszczuk government backs the reef, backs jobs and backs Queensland by delivering our state's economic recovery plan.

## ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am): I advise that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads will be absent from the House today due to illness. The Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning will take any questions relating to the minister's portfolio in question time today.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Youth Crime

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—


This House:

1. condemns the Labor government for losing control of youth crime and failing to keep families safe and secure; and
2. calls on the Labor government to restore the offence of breach of bail for youth offenders.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.14 am.

### Health System, Funding

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.14 am): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier confirm that Queensland Health has proposed squeezing more than half a billion dollars out of next year's hospital budget in the midst of Queensland's ambulance ramping crisis?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. What I will guarantee to everyone in the House and to every Queenslander is that we will have a record health budget this year—absolutely, 100 per cent—as we have continued to do every single year. This is the government that grows frontline services and protects Queenslanders from COVID—unlike those opposite, who wanted to open the borders and let the virus in and who do not want regional quarantine. Where are the cases of COVID coming from now? They are coming from hotel quarantine. They are always on the wrong side of the argument.

I will never be lectured to by those opposite on health. Isn't it wonderful that the Leader of the Opposition asked that question? He is the same Leader of the Opposition who sat at the cabinet table with his best mate, Campbell Newman—making the decisions to absolutely decimate health in this state.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Over 4,000 health cuts: nurses, admin staff—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, please resume your seat. Leader of the Opposition, I believe that your interjections are a series of random words. I understand that there is some feeling around the issue, but you will cease those interjections as I have given you guidance to do. Premier, you have one minute and 24 seconds remaining. Do you have anything to add that is pertinent to the question as asked?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Absolutely. Who can forget the fights with the doctors? The member for Moggill was part of the AMA back then. There were fights with nurses and fights with doctors. Our record health budget of over \$21 billion is \$7 billion more than when they were in office—not one, two, three, four, five or six but seven billion dollars more.

**Mr Bleijie:** And a worse health system.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Do you have some more health questions? I am happy to answer health questions.

**Ms Fentiman:** What about the cuts to the Barrett centre?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection. When our young people across Queensland needed the help the most, those opposite shut the Barrett centre. Now they want to bring back the former health minister.

*(Time expired)*

### Health System, Funding

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. When was the minister first advised that Queensland Health was looking at squeezing the budget for local hospital boards next year by \$543,217,705? Will the minister rule out putting even more pressure on local hospitals in the midst of the ambulance ramping crisis?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question: a \$21.8 billion budget in 2020-21—a record budget increase. In relation to 2021-22, the budget has not been released yet. That might be news to those opposite, but in coming weeks they will get to see what is in the budget, they will get to see what is allocated for health and they will get to scrutinise that budget. What we know is that our health budget will be going up, not down, and that we are not sacking staff. We are very proud of the fact that we have increased funding across the hospital and health services.

Since we came to government Cairns has had a 57.6 per cent increase in its budget since those opposite were in government. They cut 306 health staff out of Cairns and we have increased its budget by 57.6 per cent. At Central Queensland they cut 197 health staff and we have increased its budget by 41.9 per cent. We have increased the Central West budget by 49.8 per cent. There has been an 88.9 per cent increase to the Children's Health Queensland budget since we came to government.

At Darling Downs those opposite cut 116 health staff and we have increased its budget by 46.2 per cent. On the Gold Coast they cut 52 health staff and we have increased its budget by 59.3 per cent. In Mackay they cut 32 health staff and we have increased its budget by 53.7 per cent. In Metro North they cut 1,431 health staff and we have increased its budget by 54.1 per cent. In Metro South they cut 925 health staff and we have increased its budget by 43.1 per cent. At North West they cut 14 health staff and we have increased its budget by 42.1 per cent. At South West they cut 55 health staff and we have increased its budget by 39.8 per cent. At Sunshine Coast they cut 80 staff and we have increased its budget by 88.8 per cent—88.8 per cent! At Torres and Cape they cut 96 health staff and we have increased its budget by 5.7 per cent. At Townsville 397 staff were cut and we increased its budget by 44.7 per cent. At West Moreton 124 staff were cut and we have delivered a 51.2 per cent increase to its budget. At Wide Bay 345 staff were cut and we have increased its budget by 51.1 per cent. I think the record speaks for itself. Labor governments increase budgets and hire more staff. Those opposite just cut, sack and sell.

### Community Safety

**Mr HARPER:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the government's commitment to keeping Queenslanders safe and rebuilding our economy?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Thuringowa—a strong advocate for his local community—for the question. Next month I am looking forward to heading back up to Townsville to see all of the great work that is happening up there. As part of our path to economic recovery, we know how

important it is to expand the front line and we have a record police budget of \$2.6 billion, an increase of almost 20 per cent since we came to office. That is why at the last election I committed to deliver an extra 2,025 personnel by 2025.

Today I can confirm that we are getting on with the job. I can announce that next month around 120 new recruits will start their training at the Queensland police academy as part of the biggest boost to policing in 30 years, delivering for police across the state. In addition, next month will also see more than 100 police recruits graduate in Brisbane, and I am proud to advise the member for Thuringowa, the member for Townsville and the member for Mundingburra that more than 40 of those recruits will graduate in Townsville—that is right, Townsville—and we all know what those opposite wanted to do to the police academy in Townsville. They wanted to sell the police academy in Townsville. That is the LNP's commitment to policing in Townsville: it wanted to sell off the police academy. In further good news, I am proud to confirm that—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—Queensland Corrective Services is actively recruiting more officers and more staff as well and next month almost 100 recruits will graduate from the corrective services academy and they will be followed by around 120 extra graduates in July. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is busily training staff to meet our election commitment of 357 frontline firefighters over five years and around 60 firefighter recruits are currently going through the academy and tomorrow 12 additional recruits will join them.

Queenslanders know how important it is to have those frontline staff and it is only our government that is delivering. We had to make up for those savage cuts by the Newman government that decimated our health system. It took our government to have the largest boost to policing in this state. I want to thank the minister for his hard work and for working very cooperatively. Having those new recruits graduating is great news for Queensland and great news for our local communities.

### **Health System, Funding**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Labor has promised \$100 million to open up new hospital beds this year but is now planning to squeeze \$543 million out of the hospital budget for next year. Can the minister guarantee that this plan to remove more than half a billion dollars out of the budget next year will not see the ramping crisis get even worse?

**Dr MILES:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This series of questions from the opposition about a budget that is yet to be delivered surely has to be hypothetical.

**Mr BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! It is an interesting point of order. The first point I would make is that whilst it may be a budget that has not been delivered the concept of the budget itself is not hypothetical. It may be speculative in nature in some of the questioning, but there is an opportunity for the government to confirm or not confirm the question that is asked. In that regard, I will allow the question.

**Mr BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I had barely finished my ruling. I hope this is not on the same matter, member for Capalaba.

**Mr BROWN:** Earlier we heard an interjection from the member for Kawana, who said that this documentation relied on a leak. I believe that the member for Mudgeeraba should supply that documentation and table it in line with that question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, that is not a point of order that I will be dealing with at this point. If you have concerns about the questions in a different light, you are welcome to write to me if you have concerns that they may be misleading of the House; otherwise, there is no compulsion for the member to provide that at this point. I do recognise authentication is required at some stage to have some burden of proof. I will give the matter consideration, but I call the health minister.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. Her question is: will we be cutting the health budget in 2021-22? No. There will be an increase to the health budget.

## Infrastructure, Jobs

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the government's plan to create jobs and rebuild Queensland's economy by investing in infrastructure?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Ipswich for her question because, as part of our economic recovery plan, we are building the infrastructure that is needed right across our state. Whether that is investment in roads, whether it is investment in our hospitals or whether it is investment in our schools, we have a very clear plan for economic recovery following on from the COVID pandemic that no-one could have foreseen.

Our plan is working. We are getting on with the job. I am looking forward to hearing the Treasurer's budget when he hands that down next month. It is about jobs, jobs and more jobs. It will be a record health budget. I am absolutely sure about that. We want to see more apprentices and more young people given the opportunity to get a job in our local economy.

I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. We are committed to building more social housing. We announced that we had a \$1.6 billion investment over 10 years looking at more social housing. We know that there is a huge need out there. We have built more than 3,000 new social housing homes and started another 448. In Ipswich we have invested \$6 million to build a new 21-unit apartment complex supporting 27 jobs. What is good about these local projects is that local people are employed in constructing these apartment complexes. In Cairns we have invested \$10.6 million to construct a new 42-unit apartment complex which is supporting 34 jobs. In Woolloongabba we contributed \$6.4 million towards a \$12.1 million project to build 32 new apartments supporting 18 jobs. In Southport we are investing \$6.7 million to build 21 new homes, a project that is supporting 22 jobs and is due to be completed next month. In Townsville we are investing \$4.7 million to build 13 apartments supporting 15 jobs. They are due to be finished in August.

I am also proud to announce that today marks the launch of our new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing body. This is an absolutely critical step in improving life outcomes for our First Nations people and will help provide access to safe and sustainable housing.

We know that those opposite do not like social housing at all. A lot happened with social housing when the member for Everton was the housing minister. Those opposite wanted residents to share social housing, to have strangers in their house, and would not allow them to have holidays. They treated people in social housing disgracefully and with no respect.

## Health System, Funding

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Treasurer. The Treasurer said his efficiency cut in Health would be \$270 million per year. As revealed today, the Department of Health has tasked HHS boards with cutting over half a billion dollars next year alone. How can Queenslanders have confidence in the Treasurer's promise that this efficiency cut to local HHSs will not affect patient care?

**Mr DICK:** Thank you, member for Kawana, for your question. I am delighted to confirm to the Legislative Assembly that I am yet to and have not delivered the 2021-22 budget. I say to the member for Kawana, you will be the first to know when I deliver it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Treasurer, you will direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr DICK:** Mr Speaker, I am delighted to confirm to you that at 2 pm on Tuesday, 15 June I will be delivering the state budget. Under the standing orders the imputation, the inference, the subjective preamble by the member for Kawana that this is a cut is completely false because the budget has not yet been delivered. It has been consistent behaviour by the LNP to put up straw man arguments in the parliament pretending they are true when the truth is otherwise.

As the Premier and as the health minister have so clearly explained—even in terms the member for Kawana might understand—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** Changing tactics already. Already talking about Wellcamp. Another question. The budget for Queensland Health has increased by \$7 billion. I give it to the member for Kawana and the Leader of the Opposition: the absolute front of the members of the LNP to criticise or to suggest to any other party in this state that there has been a cut when they are the gold medallists of cuts. The only reason I want the Olympics is so we can have a competition on cuts to the Queensland budget. On the gold medal dais will be the member for Broadwater. In the silver medal position will be the member for Kawana. There will be a contest for the gold medal. There will be a photo finish.

The people who sacked 4,400 health workers—1,800 nurses and midwives—and cut funding to organisations, including community organisations that support parents who had stillborn children, and they have never apologised, and cut funding to the Barrett Adolescent Centre and caused tragedy to Queensland families, and they have never apologised, are not fit to be in government. They are not even fit to be in opposition. Stand by, member for Kawana, stand by member for Broadwater, get ready for a record health budget that I will deliver proudly for Queensland on 15 June.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

### Infrastructure, Jobs

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the government is supporting projects that create jobs in new industry and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Mackay for her question. I know what a passionate advocate she is for jobs in her region. Last week I was pleased to be on the Gold Coast with Gilmour Space Technologies to announce that we would work together to deliver the Abbot Point space launch facility. In just seven years Gilmour Space Technologies has gone from a small start-up company to one of the country's leading space technology companies with its new and innovative hybrid propulsion technology. It is not just the jobs that will come in manufacturing, supported by the payloads in these rockets, but it is also jobs in tourism for the member for Mackay's region and the wider region. It is not unusual for hundreds of thousands of people to travel to watch rocket launches like these. We should expect to see Abbot Point become a tourist attraction.

By 2036 we expect the space industry to support 6,000 jobs in Queensland and generate between \$3.5 billion and \$6 billion of economic activity. Queensland is well placed to leverage off our existing strengths. We already have the leading launch vehicle developers in the country. We have the largest share of the nation's space launch supply chain. We have the highest concentration of aircraft manufacturing and repair companies. In fact, more than half of the world's top 10 aerospace companies are here in Queensland. We have the opportunity that comes with being on the east coast of the continent and close to the equator, making launches more cost effective, allowing rockets to speed up as they travel into orbit. This is all thanks to the Queensland government's \$8 million Space Industry Strategy supporting the industry and the jobs that will go with it.

We will continue to work with the industry on other projects such as the rocket engine test site that we know is so crucial and the Earth observation data analytics hub, two projects that the Queensland government will work together with the industry on to create those thousands of jobs, to deliver those billions of dollars of economic activity, to ensure that we do not just have the launches here but we have the research here, the manufacturing here and the supply chain here because we on this side of the House work for jobs everywhere in Queensland, including in the member for Mackay's region.

### CS Energy; Callide C Power Station, Fire

**Mr WEIR:** My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen. The Queensland government owned corporation and owner of Callide C Power Station, CS Energy, has been required to pay over \$410 million of cash dividends to the Labor government over the past three years. Can the minister guarantee that requiring those dividend payments did not lead to underinvestment in maintenance and last night's fire and system failure?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for Condamine for that random set of words with a question mark at the end. Of course the answer is, yes, we can guarantee that all of the maintenance work that is required to be done on all of our power stations has been done. In fact, if the member opposite had cared to do any research into this he would know that there is a statutory obligation to do that and all of those requirements are governed by a national set of electricity rules. I can further inform the House that we have a record spend and investment in the energy network in Queensland. In fact, there has been \$2.2 billion of job-creating investment in our electricity network in this financial year alone.

Let us contrast that to the approach that they took to our electricity network. What did they do? There was a 43 per cent increase in household power prices at the same time as they were getting them ready to flog off—and not just to the highest bidder but to any bidder. What if we took the approach that their public works minister, the member for Everton, took when selling off buildings? We saw him sell those buildings for \$237 million below—



**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118. The question was about the fire that broke out yesterday, causing over 400,000 homes—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my right!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It was about the dividends but also about the cause of the fire and the maintenance. The minister is going way off what the question asked.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Kawana. I am listening to the minister's response. He is being relevant to the question as I heard it, particularly given the mention of dividends and the governance arrangements for GOCs. I believe that it is within the realm of relevance.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, member for Clayfield.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I am very happy to talk about the financial administration of publicly owned assets, because that is what Labor believes in. We believe in the importance of public ownership of those assets. We were able to get the power back on to hundreds of thousands of households yesterday because Queenslanders own their generation assets, they own their transmission, they own their distributors and we have been making sure that we invest in them. Going to Callide in particular, since 2017 we have invested \$636 million in Callide, including \$324 million in the Callide C Power Station alone.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, you will cease your interjections.

**Mr de BRENNI:** The delivery of cheap reliable electricity is a commitment that this government takes seriously. Those opposite did not want to have any part of it. They wanted to privatise the whole lot—sell it off—just as they wanted to do with social housing and government buildings.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I can categorically confirm that all of our generation assets are performing safely. I can categorically confirm that we have enough electricity to supply households and businesses across this state. For the members opposite I can confirm that it is our deliberate strategy to diversify the electricity network that enabled us last night to get the lights back on and keep them on. We kept people at work and householders were able to perform their functions. Queenslanders can trust only Labor to keep those electricity assets in public hands and deliver cheaper and more reliable electricity.

## Youth Programs

**Mr HEALY:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the government is putting more opportunities within reach of young and vulnerable Queenslanders and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Cairns for his question. I was delighted to be in the Far North of our state last week to support the expansion of the Braking the Cycle driving program. It is a terrific program that helps young people, in particular, to obtain 100 hours of driving experience before they can obtain their licence. That program has been rolled out in a number of communities in Queensland and it is being expanded. As a government we are pleased, through the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, to be providing \$16 million over five years to ensure that the program can be expanded.

I met a bright young woman, Jade, whose brother did the program and immediately got a job. She has been able to get 50 hours of driving experience through the program. I also met her mentor, Graham. I thank the mentor volunteers for what they do. They do a wonderful job to help young people to gain the skills, the confidence and the abilities to get into the employment market and live a confident life of success into the future. As we deliver our plan for economic recovery we are focused on supporting young people, we are focused on skills programs, we are focused on safety on the roads and we are focused on getting people off their L-plates.

However, some people have not got off their L-plates. When the Leader of the Opposition was elected he promised new politics. Do you remember that, Mr Speaker? He was going to be different, but all we have had is whinging, complaining and negativity. In fact, it is exactly the same old LNP. When he is at the intersection with trucks of money going south to Canberra, he just waves them on

through the intersection so that the funding can go to Victoria for the fast rail line to Geelong and to other projects such as the airport in Sydney while Queenslanders get ripped off. We get the bill from Scott Morrison but we do not get the money and the investment.

I can tell members what the Leader of the Opposition does have experience in. He has an open licence on cutting, sacking and selling. For 1,055 days he sat around the cabinet table. For 1,055 days he had an open licence on cutting, sacking and selling.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba. She did not last 1,055 days. When 'Nuclear Newman' acted on the member for Mudgeeraba he did the right thing by cutting her from the cabinet. That was the only successful cut he was responsible for. Their Deputy Whip is up the back now. He will not listen to the answer. He has to go and talk to somebody. He does that every question time. He wants to heckle but he does not want to hear the truth: the truth about cutting health services, the truth about—

**An opposition member:** Stalking.

**Mr DICK:** No, the only person stalking me in this House is the member for Kawana, because he talks about me and my dog all the time. You got it wrong, Everton. That is the experience: cutting, sacking and selling. And if they get the chance again they will do exactly the same.

### **CS Energy; Callide C Power Station, Fire**

**Mr BOYCE:** My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen. The 2020 CS Energy annual report says operating its power units by ramping up or down in response to demand and operating at lower loads for longer is outside their original design. Did the Callide C Power Station fail because it is being operated in a way that is was not designed for?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for the question. There has been a ministerial statement from the Premier, a ministerial statement from the Treasurer, a ministerial statement from myself and the answer to a question from his colleague the shadow minister, all of which explained that the causes for the incident that occurred yesterday—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I am happy to wait, Mr Speaker. As all of the ministerial statements indicated, as my press release yesterday afternoon indicated and as we have heard from the deputy commissioner and the operations team at the site, it is too early to tell what the cause of this unprecedented incident was. I can assure the member for Callide that, whilst he might think things like renewables are a fantasy, we think the safe operation of our generators is an absolute priority. All of the ministers have indicated that the safety and safe operations of our generators are our No. 1 priority.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr de BRENNI:** That is why when the fire occurred we moved to immediately evacuate the 219 staff to protect their lives. We are very confident—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my left! Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Sandgate, what is your point of order?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am very interested in hearing the minister's answer to this very serious and important question. Unfortunately, I genuinely cannot hear what he is saying because of the rabble and the row from the other side of the chamber. Mr Speaker, I appeal to you to allow members to hear the minister's answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** As the arbiter of what level of interjection is acceptable in the chamber, I am paying close attention myself and I will be asking that the minister resume his response if he has anything further to add.

**Mr de BRENNI:** As we said, as soon as it is safe to do so, the operations at the site will be investigated to determine the cause. Our No. 1 priority is getting all four of those generators back up and running. We spoke with the workforce this morning and we thanked them for the work they do every day in providing safe, cheap and reliable power. We reiterated just how critical this plant is to the

operations of not only the Queensland electricity market but also the broader National Electricity Market. The CEO informed me this morning that planning is underway for replacement of that turbine, so we were able to report that to the workforce. As I indicated, when it is safe to do so, a full investigation will occur.

### **Education, Sexual Consent**

**Ms BUSH:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Will the minister update the House on her department's work on reviewing sexual consent education in Queensland schools as well as her recent meeting with her Ministerial Student Advisory Council?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. I know of the excellent work she did before entering parliament in assisting victims of crime. I know that this is a very special issue to her. We are working together with many other stakeholders to address the review of respectful relationships education in schools. My department is consulting extensively with stakeholders across the state and non-state school sectors and with experts in the field of sexual consent and education, many of whom have contacted me since I announced the review in March this year.

In dealing with these sensitive issues, it is critical that we listen to and learn from those who will be the recipients of this reviewed education, that is, the students. As I have said time and time again in this House, schools have a role to play in this area in an age-appropriate way, but also it falls on parents and caregivers and society in general. We cannot do it alone—it is broader than just schools—but we will play our part and we will do it in an excellent manner.

Educating young people on sexual consent and how to develop healthy and safe relationships was a focus of my Ministerial Student Advisory Council meeting earlier this month. The council is made up of an amazing group of students. From Mount Isa to Townsville and from Longreach to Brisbane, these students addressed this issue in the most intelligent, sensitive and healthy manner. I was absolutely amazed by the manner in which they engaged in the conversation. Just as we listened to them on cyberbullying, led by the Premier, we will do so again on these issues.

They were very keen to say that they wanted an honest discussion about this. They did not want any gimmicks. They wanted straight talking and genuine discussion about relationships and the real-life scenarios that young people face. The young people from the student advisory council said to me that they did not want consent compared to milkshakes or tea or tacos. They want to know what constitutes this act. They want to know what information about the process and avenues for reporting are available to them. They want a real and intelligent discussion about this and no kneejerk reaction. For example, the milkshake ads of the federal government were an insult to their intelligence. It did the right thing by removing them straightaway.

We are really working well on this. I thank the member for her question. We will deliver an education program second to none, and I thank the students for their input.

### **Callide C Power Station, Fire Investigation**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is to the Minister for Energy. I refer to the minister's statement today announcing that an investigation into the Callide C Power Station failure is underway. Who is conducting the investigation, when will it be completed, and will the minister be publishing the findings so that Queenslanders can have confidence in how this problem is being handled?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for Nanango for the question. Of course Queenslanders have confidence in how the situation is being managed, because we communicated closely with all Queenslanders, whether households, businesses or large industrial users, yesterday afternoon and they worked cooperatively to help manage the situation. They are also very confident because the lights are on. They are at work and they are at school—everything is working.

I can advise the members opposite that the Australian Energy Market Operator is responsible for identifying and implementing actions across the National Electricity Market in relation to the power system. Its remit is to ensure under the National Electricity Rules a safe operating state of all generation and transmission. That has always been the case. It has been the case for many years. They will manage and coordinate, just as they did yesterday, in conjunction with me, the Department of Energy and Public Works, Powerlink, Energy Queensland and our generators right across CS Energy, Stanwell and the important publicly owned CleanCo. Thank goodness we had CleanCo there last night to provide that pumped hydro-electricity into the system.

I want to acknowledge the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and his recognition of the team that went to fight the fire to make the facility safe. That has happened. The technical staff are now on site; the engineers et cetera are taking a look at that particular turbine. There are four turbines—B1, B2, C3 and C4. It was C4 that was damaged. I am advised that the damage is so significant that it is very likely C4 will need to be replaced.

I can further inform that all hazard and comprehensive planning and preparedness arrangements are and were in place to enable us to respond to that disruption to electricity. What we saw yesterday afternoon is that all of the measures we have in place across the National Electricity Market and we in Queensland, as the publicly owned entities that provide that power and transmit it, have in our control—

**Mrs Frecklington:** So who is conducting the investigation?

**Mr de BRENNI:** For the member for Nanango's benefit, I indicated that AEMO would coordinate the response, that AEMO would ensure that the engineers on site would identify what was wrong and that the equipment is so catastrophically damaged that it will need to be replaced. The professional engineers will do that and they will do that carefully. In the meantime, we will work closely with them to ensure we get the rest of the plant back online as soon as possible.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maroochydore, you are warned under the standing orders.

### **Ambulance Service, Personnel**

**Mr WALKER:** My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on how the government is rising to meet the increasing demand for ambulance officers, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. I know that he is very supportive of our Queensland Ambulance Service and the great work that our paramedics do. Before I talk about our wonderful paramedics, I need to take this first opportunity to correct the record. Earlier I was outlining the percentage increases for our hospital and health services and I said that the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service budget had been—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you are on a warning already. I can hear you interjecting. You had been cautioned earlier and you are now officially warned. I counsel you to consider the tone of the conversation that is being held in the chamber. I may regard it as unparliamentary.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I want to correct the record. Earlier when outlining the increase since the Palaszczuk government came in in 2015 I said that the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service had had a 5.7 per cent increase. I have had it confirmed that it is actually a 39.8 per cent increase. I apologise for giving an incorrect figure on that.

In talking about our wonderful paramedics, since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has got on with the job of restoring our frontline health services which we know were so savagely cut by those opposite. I am delighted to advise the House that in May 30 new graduate paramedics have commenced with the Queensland Ambulance Service in all corners of Queensland. This is on top of the 50 additional paramedics we brought in in April. Of the 30 in May, this includes 15 more officers on the ground to assist our very busy South-East Queensland corner. This will help ease current demand. The other half of this frontline boost will be supporting regional communities such as Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Central Queensland, South-West Queensland and the Darling Downs. It is wonderful to see 50 per cent of the new paramedics going into the regions. To ensure the QAS keeps pace with the increasing demand for its services, 30 new paramedics came on line this month and an additional 60 paramedics will come on line in June. This is part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to delivering an additional 475 paramedics for Queensland.

In addition to these new graduates, 11 emergency medical dispatchers also commenced during May. These are the caring people who provide emergency assistance before the ambulance arrives. We do not talk enough about these people. We cannot imagine how difficult their job is—to take the initial calls and manage the dispatch of ambulances. I have been in the communications centre and it is extraordinary to watch the logistics involved—that is, where the ambulances are, where they need to go, assessing the demand, prioritising the demand and making sure they continue to stay in

communication with people while they are waiting for an ambulance. Under the mental health initiative they make sure that we have people in our communication centre who have those skills. We are so proud of our paramedics.

*(Time expired)*

### **Noosa, Tourism Industry**

**Ms BOLTON:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport with reference to the joint statement regarding a \$7.5 million package to lure workers to Queensland, and from which Noosa has been excluded. With my electorate having for six months had a critical shortage of hospitality and tourism workers due to our long-term housing crisis and absence of backpackers and international students, can the minister advise what will be extended to include Noosa as a matter of urgency?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Noosa for the question and for the opportunity to talk about the huge response we have had to our Work in Paradise initiative since the Premier and I launched it in Cairns last Thursday. Since its launch, we have had more than 10½ thousand people register their details to be involved in the program—to come and work in paradise—and nearly 42,000 website views as well. We developed this initiative in direct response to industry. The Premier and I had been told by tourism operators across Queensland about labour shortages in the tourism and hospitality industries, with an estimated 4,000 positions to fill. This issue is not unique to Queensland or the tourism industry, with nationwide workforce shortages across industries being reported.

Given the breadth of the issue, when designing this pilot program we focused on the areas of greatest need. Northern and Western Queensland experience the greatest barriers to attract workers for their regions due to the distances people need to travel and extreme shortages of accommodation in those regions. The uncertainty in the tourism industry last year also led to many in the 58 local government areas that make up the Northern and Western Queensland regions we are talking about taking up what are perceived to be more stable jobs in the mining sector, which has further intensified tourism workforce shortages in regional Queensland.

I acknowledge the member for Noosa's question and the fact that Noosa is also experiencing workforce shortages in the tourism and hospitality industries. I heard it firsthand from operators when I was in the region last month, as the member will recall. However, Noosa's proximity to the larger population base in Brisbane and South-East Queensland means it does not have the same travel barriers as Northern and Western Queensland when it comes to attracting workers.

As I have said from the outset, this is a trial program and we are in unprecedented times. As we finalise the delivery of this program, we will continue to assess the areas of greatest need and respond to industry appropriately, as we have done throughout our response to the impacts of the pandemic on our tourism industry and in developing our other innovative programs such as the Holiday Dollars program, the school reef trips program and the tourism business financial counselling service.

I acknowledge that there is more that we need to do and that we need to work closely with industry in doing it. At the same time, I acknowledge that the Morrison government's recent budget failed to have any further announcements and assistance for the tourism industry at a time, particularly with international borders closed, when we are seeing great stress.

### **Energy Assets**

**Mr SMITH:** My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Will the minister update the House on how public ownership of energy assets benefits Queenslanders?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. Just as all Queenslanders have done, the member's constituents in Bundaberg have clearly voted to keep their energy assets in public ownership. They have done that because Queenslanders trust the Palaszczuk government to keep their energy assets working for them, not working for multinational shareholders. They want their energy assets working for them.

That is how we got the power back on yesterday afternoon. What did public ownership give us yesterday afternoon? It gave it access to all of the information we needed. Public ownership gave us access to all of the staff, the workforce, in every station across the state and access to all of the transmission workers. Public ownership gave this government, on behalf of Queenslanders, access to

the resources to get the lights put back on. We were able to immediately make sure that we put people's safety above profits. As I confirmed earlier, the safety of the workforce is our No. 1 priority. We were almost immediately able to get power back on to all Queensland homes and businesses. In fact, by the time I reported to the parliament, nearly every household had their power restored.

We know that the situation would be different if those opposite were sitting on this side of the House. Queenslanders would have been in a terrible situation this morning. They would have been in a terrible situation because the LNP had and still has now a plan to flog off Queensland's energy assets. The sale price never mattered to them. The sale price does not matter to them. What matters to them is ideology and their suit mates in the boardrooms.

We know the LNP had 'for sale' signs made up for Powerlink. They had 'for sale' signs made up for Ergon, Energex, CS Energy and Stanwell. I advise the member for Nanango that no ownership equals no dividend. No ownership equals no control of our power assets. If anybody thinks there is a new LNP in town with the member for Broadwater at the helm, they are gravely mistaken. What did he say on 'My news feed—ask a pollie'?

**An opposition member:** Read the script.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I will read the script. He said—

We've got to stop gold plating the networks. We've got to stop milking our generators dry.

We had the member for Broadwater saying we should cut investment in our network. He would rather Queenslanders have woken up to second-rate energy infrastructure. Quite frankly, the member for Broadwater had our energy assets down at the saleyards right up until the end of 2015. He must have been having flashbacks when he was in the saleyards during Beef Week. If he thinks that Queenslanders trust them not to sell off their energy assets, he must be completely blind.

## CopperString 2.0

**Mr KATTER:** My question is for the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. The minister is on the record as expressing strong support for Vast Solar and committed to deliver CopperString 2.0. I will table an extract from *Hansard* confirming that.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 13 May 2021, from the *Record of Proceedings*, Queensland Parliament, page 1396 [713].

Vast Solar and Stanwell have indicated their project will not be able to go ahead if CopperString 2.0 is built as it cannot compete with cheap electricity from the NEM. I table media reports related to that.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of documents regarding the Vast Solar thermal solar project [714].

How will the government ensure it keeps its commitment to delivering CopperString 2.0 while Vast Solar says both projects cannot happen?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the minister, I advise the member for Traeger and the member for Noosa that their questions both had very lengthy preambles and were bordering on being too long. I give you guidance for your next question opportunities.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for the question. Of course we have indicated our strong support for CopperString. We have been working with CopperString through the early stages of that project for a number of years. In fact, we have provided \$15.8 million of support to CopperString to progress the planning of that transmission line. That conversation and work continues.

We remain open to discussing with CopperString all of those options around two-way distribution of power. CopperString is not just about taking power from the National Electricity Market to the North West Minerals Province; it is also about taking renewable energy from that province and sending it back to the National Electricity Market.

In fact, some of the solar and wind resources in that region are the best in the world. If we think about some of the generation that exists that we could be sending into the National Electricity Market, it includes the Kennedy Energy Park, the Hughenden Solar Farm, the Kidston Solar Project, Diamantina gas, Leichhardt gas, Xstrata gas and Phosphate Hill gas. CopperString is about connecting all of that generation into the National Electricity Market.

This is about nation-building infrastructure. That is what this side of the House does—support investment in nation-building infrastructure, infrastructure that supports jobs for Queenslanders that helps deliver cheaper and more reliable electricity. Ultimately, that is what heavy manufacturing needs in Queensland—a continued reduction in electricity prices. They want reliable supply.

Initiatives like CopperString and our continued investment in greater generation in that region will help provide stability to the jobs-rich resources sector that benefits from reliable, cheap electricity. That is what CopperString will deliver. We will work with all of the proponents in the region, be they in transmission or in generation, to achieve an optimal outcome that secures jobs for Queenslanders, brings more manufacturing to Queensland and secures the stability of our resources industry.

### Hervey Bay, Tourism

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is to the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping Sydney-siders to have a 'whale of a time' in Hervey Bay? Is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Hervey Bay for the question and note his genuine enthusiasm for helping more and more visitors to enjoy whale watching and other experiences on the Fraser Coast. The member for Hervey Bay has been working closely with the Fraser Coast mayor to secure flights for the region.

The first of Jetstar's direct flights from Sydney touches down this afternoon at Hervey Bay airport. In under two hours there will be 150 holiday makers who will be able to swap congestion on Parramatta Road for the magic of the Fraser Coast whale migration highway.

Jetstar's new flight schedule is expected to support 67 local jobs and deliver \$8 million for Hervey Bay's economic recovery plan. Whether you have a whale-watching boat, a motel, a local restaurant or are a cafe operator, this is great news for Fraser Coast tourism. Also on board this afternoon will be 10 travel writers and influencers for a two-day stay on the Fraser Coast. They will have some great tourism stories to tell the rest of Australia about their Hervey Bay experience.

I note that Qantas is also making it easier for interstate visitors to plan a winter getaway with direct flights on airport departure boards to key Queensland destinations. For the first time in 15 years Qantas will fly from Adelaide and Melbourne to Townsville with fares as low as \$179. The flying kangaroo will also hop nonstop from Adelaide to Cairns and from Perth to the Gold Coast.

We know that Australians are taking more regular holidays at home. With the ongoing closure of the international border, this is an important way in which we are working across the industry to help support this. According to travel sites such as Air-tracker, four of Australia's top five holiday destinations are located right here in Queensland—and why wouldn't they be? Cheaper airfares and more direct routes to our state's world-class destinations show a promising winter for tourism operators and Queensland's economic recovery plan.

That is why it is important that we have in place a range of other responses to flexibly respond to the challenges that are faced by the tourism sector and the hospitality sector. That is where our Work in Paradise trial, focused on northern and western Queensland, is going to make a difference to help address those labour force shortages.

We fundamentally understand that we need to continue to work with the tourism industry and flexibly respond to the way things operate. We know that Hervey Bay and the Fraser Coast have been a shining light and a great success. I acknowledge the work, as I said earlier, that the member for Hervey Bay and the mayor of the Fraser Coast region have done working together with the Queensland government.

*(Time expired)*


**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 25 May (see p. 1577), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (11.14 am): I rise to make my contribution to the debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This bill was introduced into the parliament and referred to the committee for examination on 25 March 2021. The committee was required to report back on the bill by 14 May 2021. Fifteen submissions were received with not one single economic or business representative providing a submission.

The LNP will be opposing the bill. There is absolutely no effort by the government to reduce debt as the title suggests. Added to this, there is a further reduction in transparency with the cessation of Building Queensland and the Queensland Productivity Commission—two of the remaining independent bodies that were initially set up to provide economic oversight and advice.

Some of the stated objectives of the bill are to: support the state's contribution to the Queensland Future Fund by providing for the transfer of the Queensland Titles Registry to a newly formed company that will be contributed to a trust within the Debt Retirement Fund structure; introduce a fee unit model to streamline the annual process of indexing regulatory fees; abolish Building Queensland and the BQ board and integrate BQ's staff, assets, records, resources and liabilities into DSDILGP; abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission and integrate its functions into Treasury and the Queensland Competition Authority; and mandate that legislation that requires or authorises print advertising or publication by government agencies shall be satisfied by online advertising or publication, subject to appropriate exemptions.

A key theme of stakeholder commentary regarding the proposed Titles Registry transfer was an emphasis on the valuable services that the Titles Registry provides and the importance of ensuring that those services continue to be delivered without interruption and for the benefit of the Queensland public. AgForce submitted—

The risks of outsourcing are difficult to articulate and foresee however, we believe that these secure title arrangements are so important to the Queensland economy that these should be directly managed by the government as a public service.

In response to stakeholder commentary about the 'corporatisation' of the Titles Registry, or privatisation of registries generally, Treasury provided the following assurances—

All current services of the Titles Registry will be preserved and there will be performance requirements imposed on Queensland Titles Registry

...

Registry Co will be contributed to a trust managed by QIC Limited, the Queensland Government-owned investment manager. Units in the trust will be held by a number of State-owned entities. This will mean Registry Co will be held by State entities through the asset ownership structure.

Treasury emphasised that employees of Registry Co will no longer be public servants. Additionally, Treasury advised—

Consultation is ongoing with the Together Union and Titles Registry staff in relation to employment conditions for transferring staff, including in relation to immunity and indemnity.

The bill proposes to repeal the Building Queensland Act to abolish BQ and the BQ board. The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council, Consult Australia and Engineers Australia objected to the bill's proposed abolition of Building Queensland and integration of its functions into DSDILGP, with all three stakeholders emphasising the importance of the infrastructure body's independence from government. The ASBEC submitted in this regard that the provision of independent, expert and transparent advice to the Queensland government is an essential function of BQ. They stated—

A governance and reporting structure that enables BQ to provide advice independent of perceived, potential or actual political influence is critical to BQ's credibility both in the eyes of the public and for decision makers.

Consult Australia similarly cautioned—

Bringing functions of Building Queensland into DSDILGP's immediately compromises the first component of good infrastructure governance, that being independence.

Consult Australia warned—

The influence of politics and election cycles on infrastructure projects amongst state/territory governments has been an ongoing issue.

They further stated—

Without an independent infrastructure body, the project prioritisation process, interrelationship and coordination with Infrastructure Australia will be unclear to agencies and the infrastructure sector. This has the potential to erode transparency and create uncertainty.

At a time where there is a desire to fast-track the delivery of projects to help boost the economy, it is important that robust analysis is undertaken for project selection.

...



At a time where there is a desire to fast-track the delivery of projects to help boost the economy, it is important that robust analysis is undertaken for project selection. ... Importantly, where Building Queensland business case analysis has determined that a project is not viable ...

Engineers Australia also expressed their concerns, stating—

The decision to abolish the Building Queensland Act and the independent governance functions within it prior to designing the new governance arrangements unnecessarily exposes Queensland to a period without independent governance arrangements in place and uncertainty regarding what governance arrangements will be in place.

As stated in the committee report—

However, the government did not undertake community consultation on the repeal of the Building Queensland Act as it considered 'the structural reform of Building Queensland only impacts the internal operations and governance structure of public sector entities and there is no material impact on the community'.

Consult Australia had a different view, stating—

It is disappointing also that organisations like ours and the community were not consulted.

Engineers Australia stated—

A change of this magnitude requires consultation among stakeholders.

This will remove any transparency from government projects. The Palaszczuk government will simply say that it is commercial-in-confidence, giving them an out and allowing them to pick and choose projects where they will gain the greatest political advantage.

Not satisfied with this, the government bill also removes the independent statutory body the Queensland Productivity Commission. There was no community consultation on this significant amendment either. There are no surprises there. The QPC's productivity and regulatory review functions are to be integrated into a newly-established Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction within Treasury. Agforce submitted—

Independence is critical to the success of both the QPC and highly successful OBPR which have worked without fear in assessing and providing scrutiny on Queensland legislation on behalf of Queensland, including particularly on issues such as vegetation management in Queensland and regulation of our sector. The Bill's proposal to abolish and reform these agencies under Treasury will hamper their ability to undertake independent review and provide frank advice to Government—and in doing so, provide transparency.

In response to these concerns Treasury stated—

The release of analysis and material produced by the new Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction will be subject to Departmental and Cabinet consideration as part of the usual policy process.


That says it all. Negative reports will never see the light of day. They will be withheld under cabinet confidentiality, which is very convenient. Maybe the office of productivity should have a look at the work rate of this Palaszczuk government, given that we only have one bill on the *Notice Paper* for this sitting. You do not need your toes—only your fingers—to count the total number of bills for 2021. The war on the regions continues with this government, but this time the focus is regional newspapers. As stated in the committee report—

The Bill proposes to amend the Financial Accountability Act 2009 (FA Act) to insert a new part 5A to mandate that, subject to certain exemptions, the print requirement must be met by online advertising or publication either on a government website, in an online version of a newspaper, or on a different website if appropriate, rather than in a printed newspaper.

We have seen those opposite use this bill as an excuse to bash the former Newman government. I would like to remind those opposite that Campbell Newman was the premier of Queensland for two years, 10 months and 19 days, concluding 14 February 2015, which means that the Palaszczuk government has been devastating the Queensland economy for six years, three months and 12 days as of today. It is time for this government to take responsibility for its actions. It seems a bit rich to keep blaming others for your mistakes. Now this legislation will hide even more of those mistakes.

Yesterday it was interesting to hear Minister Enoch talk about the lack of public housing. There was article in the *Toowoomba Chronicle* yesterday that talks of the crucial need in the Toowoomba region alone for 600 more public housing spaces, so that is neglect by this government, not past governments. This government needs to start taking responsibility for its failures in health and the regions. The list goes on and on. This is a government of failure.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): I reiterate warnings for the members for Buderim, Chatsworth, Burleigh, Kawana, Everton, Maroochydore, and Nanango. The warnings are valid until lunchtime.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.24 am): I rise today in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. The objectives of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill are to: support the state's contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund established under the Queensland Future Fund Act 2020 by providing for the transfer of the Queensland Titles Registry to a newly formed company that will be contributed to a trust within the Debt Retirement Fund structure; introduce a fee unit model to streamline the annual process of indexing regulatory fees; abolish Building Queensland and the Building Queensland board and integrate Building Queensland's staff, assets, records, resources and liabilities into Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; change the governance structure of the National Injury Insurance Agency, Queensland by abolishing the board of the National Injury Insurance Agency, Queensland Agency and appointing the Insurance Commissioner as chief executive officer responsible for the management of the National Insurance Injury Scheme, Queensland; repeal the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 so that machinery-of-government changes may reintegrate the Public Safety Business Agency into public safety entities; abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission and integrate its functions into Treasury and the Queensland Competition Authority; and mandate that legislation that requires or authorises print advertising or publication by government agencies shall be satisfied by online advertising or publication subject to appropriate exemptions.

Like many of my fellow Queenslanders both here in this chamber and across the broader community, I saw firsthand how the brutal LNP cuts to frontline services, education and transport affected this great state. Communities were hurting across Queensland. My community in Toohey was hurting. Changes introduced by Labor since 2015 have seen the Queensland economy grow and prosper. It was these economic strategies that have provided us with the resources and capacity to withstand shutdowns under the global pandemic. I know the Queensland government is implementing sound fiscal strategies that will deliver budgetary savings and support Queensland's economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19. That is the Labor way.

This bill is intended to progress elements of the state's approach to managing debt and public service delivery efficiencies, including by effecting a range of measures to implement the outcomes of some of the reviews and providing the legislative changes to enable these measures to occur. The bill provides for direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. Importantly, indirect savings are only one part of the government's broader savings agenda.

We already have the legislative framework in place for creating and administering the Queensland Future Fund. This was established with the August 2020 enactment of the Queensland Future Fund Act, which also instituted the first sub fund in the Debt Retirement Fund. The government undertook to formally give effect to the Debt Retirement Fund by contributing assets, including those associated with the Titles Registry and other investments, to seed the fund by 30 June 2021.

There have been comprehensive due diligence processes undertaken in relation to the identified assets to establish valuations for the assets, confirm their suitability for inclusion and ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to facilitate their transfer to the Debt Retirement Fund. The groundwork has taken place for Queensland to be able to create special purpose accounts for the purpose of managing current and future debt reduction programs without the need to resort to the LNP model of slash, cut and sell.


The Titles Registry was among the first of the publicly owned assets to be earmarked for contribution to the Debt Retirement Fund, with the proposed transfer to enable the Titles Registry's value to be recognised on the state's balance sheet for the first time. The bill would give effect to the transfer by providing for the transmission of assets, liabilities, rights, responsibilities, obligations, operations and employees of the current Titles Registry to the 'operator'—the Queensland Titles Registry Pty Ltd—a newly formed company that would be contributed to a Queensland Investment Corporation managed trust within the Debt Retirement Fund structure.

A key theme of stakeholder commentary regarding the proposed Titles Registry transfer was an emphasis on the valuable services that the Titles Registry provides and the importance of ensuring those services continue to be delivered without interruption for the benefit of the Queensland public. Whilst there were concerns raised by a couple of stakeholders regarding the proposed arrangements, there was also strong support for the proposal, with stakeholders commending the government's decision to retain public ownership of the Titles Registry in contrast to moves by other states to privatise their equivalent registries. Treasury provided assurances that all current services of the Titles Registry will be preserved and there will be performance requirements imposed on the new company.

Contractual arrangements will be specified with further service levels for the performance of registry functions, including accuracy, governing the delivery of title registry functions. Further, the bill provides the state with step-in and directional rights, which would only be exercised in exceptional circumstances. The new entity will be held by state entities through an asset ownership structure.

It is proposed the bill will also repeal the Building Queensland Act and the Building Queensland board. This will allow for the integration of staff, assets, records, resources and liabilities of Building Queensland into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Queensland Treasury have advised there would be no forced redundancies resulting from the restructure. By incorporating Building Queensland into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, it will provide for the existing capital program reporting to produce a single, efficient infrastructure pipeline that reports what is funded and on the way and what significant potential state investments have commenced business cases. The Auditor-General has previously observed that Building Queensland's infrastructure pipeline reporting 'creates duplicate reporting requirements for agencies', given the same proposals are incorporated in pipeline reporting for the State Infrastructure Plan. While the transitional implementation during 2020-21 will include some one-off implementation costs, the resultant savings generally will be realised from 2021-22.

The bill also proposes to amend the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act. The National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, through the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland, funds necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support for people who sustain an eligible serious personal injury in a motor vehicle accident in Queensland. A levy on registered vehicles funds the fund. The amendment under the bill would abolish the board and transfer responsibility for management of the agency to a CEO. Changes to the governance structure of the agency are intended to drive greater efficiencies and provide stronger alignment of the governance of motor accident personal injury schemes. The Australian Lawyers Alliance supported the amendments as a savings measure that 'will lead to less money being spent on unnecessary litigation, poor stakeholder management and bureaucracy', and endorsed the appointment of the current insurance commissioner as the CEO of the agency, pointing to the commissioner's successful oversight of Queensland's compulsory third-party scheme and of the agency for an interim period when the NIISQ commenced. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (11.34 am): I rise to speak on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. The aim of this bill is to ostensibly reduce debt and make savings. There is nothing in this bill which is really about debt reduction. There is nothing about savings. The title is neatly packaged up by the government's spin teams to create a sleight of hand. It is a con being perpetrated on the taxpayers of Queensland. This omnibus bill amends or repeals 18 separate acts and regulatory instruments across a myriad of portfolios. The policy objectives are to abolish or transfer various agencies, change the governance structure of another, streamline the annual indexation of regulatory fees, remove the obligation to publish public notices in printed newspapers and make changes regarding regulations in the tattoo industry.

The Treasurer's introductory speech claimed that \$3 billion in savings will be made over the next four years, yet at the public hearing the Under Treasurer could only commit to \$3 million in savings. According to the forward estimates, we now know debt will hit an eye-watering \$130 billion and the government's only solution is sneaky accounting tricks rather than dealing with the hard decisions. It is valuing our titles office at \$4.1 billion and assigning that value to the Queensland Future Fund. It is a dubious valuation designed to make the books look better and just puts off the hard decisions. There will be a day of reckoning.

The New South Wales titles office is valued at \$2.6 billion and Victoria's at \$2.85 billion. How is Queensland's worth so much more? It looks suspiciously like a con trick—value high as you transfer it on the books. The titles office currently manages land and water rights which are essential for successful agricultural businesses. Approximately 60 per cent of Queensland is still owned by the state and leased for primary production, and there is a complex web of tenure arrangements and conditions which affect each lease. AgForce opposes this proposal. It submitted—

With these leasehold arrangements, plus other very valuable agricultural assets such as water allocations and survey plans stored in and managed by the Titles Registry,  
it was—

... concerned with any moves to alter long-standing and proven management arrangements.

The Treasurer stated that this measure would—

... improve our debt-to-revenue ratio by approximately nine per cent when taken into account by rating agencies when assessing Queensland's debt burden.

The transfer of this asset is being used to offset debt. It is not being used to pay down debt. It is being done simply to improve a debt-to-revenue ratio for the satisfaction of the credit rating agencies. The government is passing debt on to future generations. AgForce said—

... we believe the stated quantum of those savings are minimal when considered in light of the significant value of the assets that sit within the Registrar. The risks of outsourcing are difficult to articulate and foresee however, we believe that these secure title arrangements are so important to the Queensland economy that these should be directly managed by the government as a public service. We also hold concern about what will happen over time as the commercial imperative to shareholders will increasingly drive decision making in this area, potentially over the interests of the public good.

This bill will integrate the functions of the Queensland Productivity Commission into Treasury. It will be absorbed into the ever-expanding bureaucracy and lose its independence. The QPC is an independent economic review body which reviews complex economic and regulatory issues and proposes policy reforms. It has investigated serious issues such as electricity prices, service delivery in remote Indigenous communities and improving regulation. Last year it delivered a report demonstrating that productivity had declined since 2015. Despite being a 2015 Labor election commitment, the number of inquiries under the QPC since 2017 has seriously shrunk. Only six matters were looked at in 2017 and only five since then. Last year only one issue was referred to the QPC. Clearly, the government is silencing the messenger because it does not like the message.

The QPC has called out the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries regarding the highly contentious fisheries regulations and amendments. In 2019 the QPC said—

As the proposed amendments may result in adverse impacts they require further analysis under the guidelines ... the Commission does not consider the analysis and process, including the proposed discussion paper and impact statement to be equivalent to the requirements under the guidelines.

For example, the guidelines set out requirements for systematic analysis and assessment of the costs and benefits of the amendments (including the cumulative impacts) compared with alternative options for addressing the policy problem.

This should include analysis of direct and indirect environment, competition, and consumer/community impacts to provide sufficient evidence to decision-makers that any recommended regulation delivers the greatest net benefit to the Queensland community.

Given this, further analysis and consultation in the form of a Consultation RIS is required under the guidelines.

The agriculture minister ignored the QPC advice, refusing to undertake an RIS. In October last year the Queensland seafood industry wrote to the QPC regarding the impact of the changes. The QPC's principal commissioner said—

I can advise that between 1 April 2019 and 22 September 2020, ... the Office of Best Practice Regulation reviewed several of the measures included in the Amendment Regulation, at the request of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (the department).

The OBPR advised the department that due to likely significant adverse impacts of some of the proposed amendments, further regulatory impact analysis was required ... the Queensland Government decided not to complete a regulatory impact statement.

It demonstrates the minister's lip-service when it comes to accountability and transparency. AgForce said that independence is critical to the success of the QPC which had worked 'without fear in assessing and providing scrutiny on Queensland legislation ... including particularly on issues such as vegetation management in Queensland and regulation of our sector'. It opposes the abolishment of the QPC because it 'will hamper their ability to undertake independent review and provide frank advice to government—and, in doing so, provide transparency'.

Regional areas rely on their local newspapers. The government proposes removing the need to publish public notices in printed newspapers. It says publishing them on the social media pages of the relevant government department is enough. This is arrogant and an ignorant move. Publishing public notices is important to maintain transparency about changes in our communities. The Queensland Country Press Association said that this proposal poses a 'risk of government transparency around sensitive decisions, such as land use, mining leases et cetera where departments and corporations could opt to place notices online, where they would fundamentally be "hidden" from general gaze'.

This measure also withdraws support for local printed publications. It is clear there is a whole world of printed publications that the Brisbane-centric government arrogantly assumes do not exist. The government assumes that because they do not read them, they must not exist. Nothing is further from the truth.

The Treasurer justified this proposal by saying that several regional and rural locations no longer had a print newspaper. However, all the locations that the Treasurer listed have locally printed independent newspapers. In my own region, locals found that as the *Gympie Times* transitioned to

online in July last year, a new *Gympie Today* emerged in print form. Locally printed newspapers rely on publishing public notices as part of their revenue base to stay afloat. QCPA President Phil Le Petit told *Gympie Today* that the Treasurer's comments were misinformed.


In the last year the QCPA has expanded to 47 print publisher and 29 online publisher members with the addition of 22 new newspaper members. They are mostly startups in centres previously serviced by News Corp regional newspapers. The government should be welcoming and supporting the emergence of new fledgling businesses rather than finding ways to make it harder for them to exist.

The QCPA submission stated—

This a time when the Queensland Government should be celebrating the strong resurgence of independent newspapers in regional areas, where there are now more independent publishers than there has been for decades.

This growth belies a key reason—loss of local newspapers in regional areas—provided as justification for the change to the advertising regulations.

I oppose this bill.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.44 am): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This is good policy. This is good policy which will deliver better services for Queenslanders. It will reduce red tape. It will streamline processes for government, which will lead to greater effectiveness and efficiencies when it comes to delivering services, which means better outcomes for Queenslanders. It is a plan for better services. It is a plan to support our economic recovery. It is a plan to support more jobs in our economy.

It is very different to the plan of those opposite. I cannot help but go back to the LNP's plan for Queensland. They actually published a number of reports about it. The first one was called the *Queensland Commission of Audit: final report* dated February 2013 signed off by Mr Costello. They could not bring themselves to say what they actually wanted to do in here, but let's interpret their words.

In that report they say they want to 'release capital locked up in mature assets'. That is code for privatise. What do they want to do? They want government to be 'an enabler, not necessarily the doer'. That is code for outsourcing, contracting out, privatising. Here we go, they had to say it more than once. They want to 'release capital currently tied up in government owned corporations'—privatisation.

They wanted to go further than that because then with their plan of cutting, sacking and selling they started on our frontline services—the police, the fire and emergency services, and the department of corrective services. They commissioned another review called the Keelty Review—in other words the Queensland Police and Community Safety Review.

**Mr Stevens:** It was years ago.

**Mr RYAN:** It was August 2013. What was in their plan then? They actually admit in this report that their plan—this is their plan—will lead to 'significant reform in the portfolio and significant change for stakeholders'. What did it lead to? It led to sackings—sackings of police officers, sackings of those people who worked in the Police Service. It led to planning around privatising aspects of the emergency services, police and community safety portfolios. It led to planning around outsourcing and contracting out, underfunding of community safety organisations and not even providing enough money so that the Police Service could buy new police cars. That is what this plan led to—an outrageous attack on our community services and our police.

Their plan—they were actually planning to do this—was to privatise speed cameras. That is what they were planning to do. They wanted to outsource watch houses. They wanted to outsource prisoner transport. They had cuts to the Rural Fire Service, which led to Rural Fire Service volunteers protesting. Do honourable members know what they did—and even this is pretty ordinary. They cut the SES cadet program, which was an opportunity for young people to volunteer in their community to help their community. That was part of their plan.

The 'P' in 'LNP' stands for privatisation. That is what they were planning to do. It was very obvious what they wanted to do to the prisons in Queensland. In fact, the front page of the *Courier-Mail* contained an article headed 'Wheels in motion to privatise state jails'. It states—

THE State Government is embarking on a secret plan to privatise all Queensland prisons ...

The proposal is aimed at saving money, with privately managed prisons reportedly proving 10 per cent cheaper to operate on average than public prisons, mainly—

and this is the important point; this is why we support public prisons—

because of staffing ratios—meaning fewer staff per prisoner.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I raise a very important issue. The long title of the bill is very long but, again, it has nothing to do with what the minister is talking about. I ask him to be brought back to the long title, which is extensive but not as extensive as what he is talking about.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Minister, you have had a good go, regaling us with history. I ask you to relate your comments to the long title of the bill for the remainder of your contribution.

**Mr RYAN:** In talking about plans to reduce debt and to have savings, in particular bringing it to something very contemporary around prison operation, only a few months ago at the last election the LNP's policy document—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. 'Corrections Act' is not contained in the long title. 'Privatisation of corrections' is not contained in the long title. You have just given the minister a warning in terms of bringing him back to the bill. I ask that he be brought back to the bill for a second time.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask that you refrain from straying away from the long title of the bill and refer to items of legislation that are referred to in the bill.

**Mr WHITING:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The issues dealt with by the member for Morayfield are covered in transcripts of committee hearings on the bill. They are covered in the green paper as well. I certainly urge you to consider those things in making future rulings.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bancroft, your point of order is relevant. Matters referred to in the committee report, under the standing orders and practice, are relevant to debate. However, Minister, I ask you to relate specifically to the committee report and to items in the long title of the bill.

**Mr RYAN:** In talking about plans to reduce debt and to create savings, it is important to look at alternatives that are very contemporary and that were canvassed in the committee. I take my role as a parliamentarian very seriously, and I review all of the available materials to make a contribution to the debate. If the member for Kawana has not taken the time to look at the relevant documents for this debate—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Bancroft mentioned that the issues the minister was talking about in this debate are contained in the bill and the committee report. I would like the member for Bancroft to authenticate, because I cannot see—

**Ms GRACE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister for Education, please resume your seat. I am listening to a point of order.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The member for Bancroft raised a point of order to assist with your ruling. I have just looked at the greens again and I cannot see privatisation of prisons in the green to which the member for Bancroft referred. I suspect that the member for Bancroft has misled you, Mr Deputy Speaker, in terms of your ruling.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you for your point of order, member for Kawana. I will listen to the member for Sandgate and then come back to the member for Kawana's point of order.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, you will no doubt know that the Manager of Opposition Business knows the ways in which he can raise such concerns. He should be doing so in the appropriate manner. I am concerned that we are now getting to the point where we are seeing some very frivolous points of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you have a point of order to raise, member for Sandgate?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I implore you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to provide guidance to the Manager of Opposition Business to ensure we can get back to debating the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Sandgate, for your assistance. Member for Kawana, you realise that there is a process for raising alleged misleadings of the House with the Speaker. If you consider that the member for Bancroft has done so, I will ask you to follow that process. To come back to the initial point of order about relevance, the committee report and the long title of the bill, Minister, I ask you to please keep your comments to the long title of the bill and items that have been canvassed in the committee report, which we have determined do form part of relevance in the debate, and not stray outside of those matters.

**Mr RYAN:** Part of our plan to reduce debt and deliver savings is to keep prisons in public hands. We are very proud of that policy, and that is something we are committed to. Also part of our plan is to reverse a very bad decision of the previous government that was motivated around contestability, privatisation and outsourcing; that is, to repeal the Public Safety Business Agency Act and to restore those services that are provided by the Public Safety Business Agency to their home agency. The members of that agency are overjoyed that they are coming home to their home agency. They are also relieved that a vehicle set up to privatise, contract out and outsource their jobs is being demolished. Those jobs are protected because they now are in their home agency. They are now guaranteed Public Service agency jobs.


This will deliver better outcomes for government. It is always good to look at the perverseness that goes along with the motivation of those opposite around privatisation, contracting out and outsourcing, because the Public Safety Business Agency was set up to fail. It had duplication and extra red tape and it lacked efficiencies, all because those opposite were motivated by their ideology to outsource and privatise those jobs. What a disgrace. This government values the role of the Public Service. We want to protect and honour those jobs in Public Service agencies. That is why we are acting to get rid of the Public Safety Business Agency and return those jobs to government.

This bill will lead to better outcomes for Queenslanders because it is about supporting the better delivery of services, particularly in the emergency services space through the repeal of the Public Safety Business Agency Act. It is also about streamlining processes and ensuring we have efficiencies and effectiveness when it comes to delivering government services. It also speaks to our values around the Public Service and opposing privatisation, because we know what happens with privatisation: you get worse services and fewer jobs and you lose control over important aspects of government business, which is what of course happened with the Public Safety Business Agency.

I remind those opposite about our investment in the Public Service. This is about supporting and building our public safety agencies to make sure they are in the best position to deliver on behalf of the people of Queensland. It is important to acknowledge our investment in policing—of course, that will be enhanced through those Public Safety Business Agency resources coming back—in Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and in corrective services.

The Public Safety Business Agency is on track to fully transition back to home agencies by 30 June. I acknowledge that those staff members transitioning now and who will transition over the next five to six weeks have worked very hard as part of this transition. It is a reflection of their commitment to not only the people of Queensland but also their home agencies that they are working so hard to ensure this transition is successful. They are professionals. They are dedicated to their roles and they deserve the respect of all members of this House. They certainly do not deserve the threat that came with the establishment of the Public Safety Business Agency by those opposite in terms of their jobs being privatised, contracted out or outsourced.

We value our public servants. They are outstanding in terms of carrying out their roles. This is an important bill for Queenslanders. It is an important bill for the police and emergency services agencies. It will lead to better outcomes. It is my pleasure to support the bill, and I encourage all those in this House to do the same.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (11.58 am): I rise to contribute to debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. It is pure luck that I am speaking just after the police minister. I wish we were talking about the 'crime reduction and police spending bill 2021' because the people of Townsville are calling for a reprieve to the crime problem on the streets right now, but I will come back to that later.

This bill does nothing to reduce the debt of Queenslanders. We are sitting in \$130 billion of debt right now. This bill does some great things in moving things around and making it look good for our creditors to ensure that we keep our AAA credit rating, but the fact of the matter is that it does nothing to reduce the debt across Queensland. It does enough to keep the lights on and keep the creditors happy and there is enough going back into the coffers to ensure that the debt is being paid down so that the interest rate is being looked after.

As I said, this bill does nothing to reduce debt in Queensland. To be fair, today and yesterday during the debate we have heard different ideas from both sides of the House in terms of reducing debt across Queensland. The Labor Party has pointed its finger at the LNP saying that the only way that the LNP could bring debt down is by selling off assets and that that is entrenched in the LNP's DNA. The

fact is the Labor Party was the only party that had a good chance at selling off assets across Queensland such as rail, motorways or forestry. The fact of the matter is the LNP did not get an opportunity to sink its teeth into selling off assets across Queensland.

The KAP has a very different attitude when it comes to reducing debt across Queensland. Believe it or not, in order to reduce debt in Queensland for future generations, we believe that it would be better to go into further debt right now and invest in things that are nation-building infrastructure to ensure that one day we have assets that can generate an income to pay down our debt across Queensland instead of spending money on throwing parties like the Olympics in a few years time, and once again I will get into that later. There are ways to go into debt to make money, yet this state government has failed to do that.

There are two types of young people in their 20s. The first type gets into debt and continues to spend their money buying a new Maloo ute or a new jetski to keep up with the Jones and to keep everyone happy. The second type are those in their 20s who make really good fiscal decisions about buying assets that they will eventually pay down and that will generate an income for them in the future. When those people get into their 30s and 40s, those sorts of investments start to pay off while poor Mr Maloo and Mr Jetski has nothing in his 30s or 40s. The one who has bought the investment properties is starting to live a better life and the life that he has invested in. That is what we should be doing in Queensland—investing in things that generate an income for not only now but also generations to come. We in this House have a responsibility to ensure that we look after the generations that come after us. That is why we are here—that is, to pave the road for the better for generations to come.

Unfortunately, the state government has sorted out some of the debt problems in the here and now without annoying too many of our constituents by reducing the amount of money being spent on things that are important to the Labor Party. The government has done a good thing by ensuring that there are protections in place so that if and when other governments get into power at different stages they do not get the chance to sell off some of our assets. The important thing that Queenslanders need to know is that the KAP will continue to be in this parliament and protect Queenslanders from having their assets sold off. That is part of our core values and principles. At a time when parties that represent constituents across Queensland do not have a value set anymore, we run off a value set. That is why Queenslanders can be assured that the KAP will always have their best interests at heart not only when it comes to generating wealth for this state but also when it comes to reducing debt.

I want to touch on some aspects contained within the bill, and it is not good news for the many western, rural and regional communities across Queensland that rely on print media. Print media is the way that most regional locals and the elderly find out exactly what the state government is up to. They see the notifications in the paper. They rummage through the Wednesday paper and make sure that they get to the last couple of pages to see those advertisements. If this bill is passed through the House that will be no more—that is, there will be no print media advertising from the state government.

To be fair, both sides of the House have used that opportunity in the past to spruik their policies, but unfortunately this will be a nail in the coffin of many small newspapers as this funding from advertising is taken away. I do not mean to cause offence by saying this, but members should go through a Queensland government website and try to extract the information they need. It is difficult enough for those people who are computer literate, but some of the elderly have not taken up the opportunity to learn to use a smartphone or a PC or an iPad. It is sad that we are going to take away the opportunity for them to be kept up to date.

There is another aspect to the bill that is interesting which affects a small but important small business group across Queensland—that is, tattoo artists. They were very concerned about regulations around tattoo inks that cannot be used in Queensland. Just as the state government put a line through the firearms industry in Queensland at the start of COVID without completely understanding the supply chain, unfortunately it did not understand the tattoo industry and its supply chain. Tattoo artists cannot even buy an ink made in Australia right now. It all comes from overseas. However, I do acknowledge that the health minister will introduce amendments in this regard. It is good to see that the government has acknowledged what the public has said and acknowledged these small businesses, but once again the government moved too quickly in a direction without understanding the issues that will be changed by legislation. That is why it is important to ensure that we undertake a RIS on any regulatory change.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I take that interjection on safety. That is right: we are going to revisit this, but do not put a line through an industry that you have no idea about before—

**A government member** interjected.




**Mr DAMETTO:** I have read the bill, but I will not take that interjection.

I will give the House some examples of what we should be doing in Queensland in order to reduce debt. We should scrap the Olympics bid. No-one in regional Queensland wants it. Both sides of the House are spruiking it down here because Brisbane wants it. This is something that Brisbane wants. Regional Queensland does not want it. We can reduce the debt if we stop spending money on parties. If the government wants to spend its money on things that generate an income, here is a list: invest in CopperString. Instead of playing two sides—that is, either building solar in the midwest or building CopperString—build CopperString and back it, not with \$50 million. Come out and back it. This is something that Queenslanders could own and it is something that Queenslanders could generate an income off.

In my own electorate in North Queensland there is the Bio-Energy sugar mill. If there were parts of this bill that talked about an ethanol mandate, for example, or even backing these sorts of projects financially, we could get a whole industry off the ground generating income for the state. Hell's Gates is a project that has been stalled at every stage. If there is a huge problem with agriculture on the east coast of Queensland and everyone is hell-bent on shutting that down, then move it west. Go west, young son!

We can build things in the west that we do not want to have on the coast, but we need the water to do it and we need the investment from the state government and the backing of the state government on these projects. We also need to ensure that we stop the sale by stealth of our electricity generation across Queensland. We have to continue investing in state owned energy-generating projects and not allowing multinationals from overseas to kick off solar and wind farms and then literally siphon Queenslanders' money overseas. That is another thing that reduces the income of this state and increases the debt of this state.

There are many ports across the north. If we open up the north and open up the gulf, we will generate income for the whole state. If that happened we would not have to talk about a debt reduction bill and the government would not have to change how it names things or think up creative accounting strategies to ensure that the creditors are happy. There are better ways to bring down debt in Queensland, there are better ways to consolidate debt and there are better ways to build regional and rural Queensland.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.08 pm): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, especially its small business initiatives. The Palaszczuk government is delivering our plan for economic recovery. We are keeping our promises to Queenslanders to fund frontline services that keep them safe, create jobs and grow the economy. We are unashamedly focused on all jobs because we know that there is dignity in work. It is because of our economic recovery plan and because we are delivering sensible, prudent savings through this bill that we can continue to roll out programs that are getting Queenslanders into work.

To give members some statistics, since 2018 we have supported over 32,000 young Queenslanders through free TAFE and apprenticeships for under 25s—that was very popular in my local state high schools when I visited to talk about it; we have supported more than 25,000 jobseekers into jobs through Back to Work; we have created over 36,000 jobs through Skilling Queenslanders for Work; and we are partnering with small business owners and managers across our state through the Big Plans for Small Business package, providing financial support, training and expert advice.

Our economic recovery plan, including these prudent savings, means more support for small businesses and small to medium enterprise too, which I have spoken about in this House many times because I have so many of them in my electorate. Our small businesses employ nearly one million Queenslanders—I should know, I used to work for one. Our restaurant employed staff, but it also created hundreds of indirect jobs for our suppliers, many of whom were also small businesses or SMEs that are based in Queensland and employed Queenslanders.

During the last 12 months our government has helped thousands of small businesses stay afloat through COVID-19. We made available more than \$180 million in small business COVID-19 adaptation grants which have been paid to more than 20,000 small businesses. These grants have helped them to pay their bills, diversify and change the way they operate during COVID. Many small businesses in my electorate, such as Silver Dove Funerals in Sumner and the Piggyback Cafe in Jindalee, received money to assist them during COVID to keep their employees on the books, stay viable and come out the other side so that we can build back better. We acknowledge their resilience and we are now focused on helping them to bounce back. Last year it was fantastic to call those businesses and let

them know that they had been successful in receiving those grants and, excitingly, many of them used the funds to hire additional local businesses to assist with their transition. During this time Flex PR helped many local businesses in my area weather that storm.

For many businesses the pandemic has been a catalyst for change—that goes for both big and small businesses. It is interesting to note that more than 7,000 Queenslanders started their own business in the 2019 financial year despite the pandemic, which I think speaks to the confidence in our community. It is thanks to the economic management of the Palaszczuk government that Queensland is and continues to be the place to be for small and medium businesses.

Our new grants programs are targeting emerging businesses, including sole traders, established businesses and those that are growing into medium sized businesses. These grants are in many ways the direct result of the Small Business Roadshow that was operated earlier this year when the minister for small business and her department crisscrossed this great state. Despite the fact that Queensland is a large and diverse state with many different needs, I understand that the feedback that was received from these roadshows was fairly consistent right throughout the state. Small businesses right throughout Queensland held fairly similar views about what needed to be done by the government, and the minister for small business has wasted no time in listening and acting.

Contained in this bill is the establishment of the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. We want to continue to make it easier to do business right here in Queensland. This integration of the Queensland Productivity Commission with Queensland Treasury will drive greater economic productivity and economic growth to promote economic recovery. The Queensland Small Business Commissioner has already started working with the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. These offices will pursue further improvements for small business through regulatory reforms and modernising and streamlining the regulatory environment.

We know that when people start a small business it is not necessarily because they have a firm grasp of, or even an interest in, government regulations. It is because they have an idea, they have a passion and they have the get-up-and-go and the motivation to have a crack at getting their big idea off the ground and making something out of it. This Friday I will be visiting a brand new business in my electorate—it just launched this week—the Cub Cave. It is run by a local Jindalee mum, Sarah. It is a completely online business borne from the idea of quality baby products from a local mum of three. Due to COVID Sarah has realised that far from being a drawback, an online-only business could be a real asset. It is a wonderful way to test the market with her great new idea without necessarily investing in lots of stock and overheads and the other things that come with starting up a business.


Our communities right across Queensland are full of wonderful entrepreneurs just like Sarah. This Friday I am certainly looking forward to stocking up on baby gifts for family and friends. Businesses like the Cub Cave will only benefit from our red-tape reduction strategy as our government recognises that business managers and owners working on their business do not want to spend any more time than they have to on regulation. They want to spend it strategising on how they can expand.

We want to help small business grow and thrive. Our small business grants complement this, whether it is the ever popular digital grants, Mentoring for Growth or our COVID-specific grant options that we rolled out last year. During COVID we rolled out free training for small business owners to transition online with short courses on cybersecurity, digital communications and digital literacy and we saw over 24,000 enrolments. We rolled out the biggest changes to payroll tax in over a decade, including a regional discount. We also re-established the Queensland Small Business Commissioner, which was previously abolished by the LNP. We know that this role will give strong support to our small businesses as they navigate this new post-COVID economy. It is the Palaszczuk government that has stood beside small business owners through thick and thin, keeping Queenslanders safe and keeping our economy going and growing.

This red-tape reduction will free up business owners to do other government paperwork, like submitting grant applications for the Ignite Ideas Fund or Made in Queensland. Recently I was lucky enough to tour the premises of a couple of successful proponents in my electorate, including National Plastics & Rubber, who, it may interest the House to know, actually make the chock wedges for large trucks in every mine throughout Queensland. They are an incredibly successful business and were recently successful in getting their first major government grant, as I understand it. We also have IntelliDesign which has been a successful recipient of the Ignite Ideas Fund. I thank Minister Butcher for coming out to tour that company with me last year. It is one of the many small businesses in Mount Ommaney that will benefit from the changes that we are bringing before the House today in the small business space.

Businesses, both small and large, have the opportunity to tender for government works through the QTender process, but also government departments go out and proactively source quotes from small and medium enterprises throughout Queensland. Photogrove, a business in my electorate, has small a Queensland Mines Inspectorate tender that they were proactively approached for over 10 years ago. It is their single biggest contract. This is one example of our Queensland government going out to source quotes, looking for local businesses that it can provide work to. This contract makes a huge difference to Photogrove. They are a business that has been operating for over 50 years. They were not always in Mount Ommaney. They were once based in the city. That is how old they are. They told myself and Milton Dick when we visited that they would not get by without this fantastic contract.

Suffice to say this bill will free up time for small and medium businesses in Queensland to further explore the opportunities that exist to provide quotes for government contracts, and I am looking forward to working with my small businesses so that even more of them can be proud Queensland government suppliers. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (12.18 pm): The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 is a total con job. It should be renamed the 'cooking the books bill 2021', because when one unpacks it, it creates no substantial debt reduction and no real savings.

This state Labor government broke its election promise to borrow only \$4 billion and instead borrowed \$28 billion. I have heard the Labor members who have spoken to this bill try to suggest that they have introduced it so that Queensland's assets cannot be sold. It was Labor under the Beattie and Bligh governments that sold off Queensland's assets. Labor sold the Port of Brisbane, Labor sold Queensland National Rail, Labor sold Queensland Motorways and Labor sold the Cairns and Mackay airports. I could list another 10 assets sold off by Labor, totalling \$16 billion worth of assets and now we have this bill.

This bill cements Queensland's abysmal economic position and will only continue to promote intergenerational debt that our children and our grandchildren will have to suffer under for years to come. I will be joining my colleagues in opposing this bill because I cannot in good conscience support a bill that is a complete con job. If it actually led to saving hard-earned taxpayer money I would be the first to support it, but this bill is a complete farce. It is a ruse and it is disgraceful.

**Dr Rowan:** Labornomics.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take that interjection. The intention of this bill is to reform the business and the balance sheet of the Queensland government in an effort to make good on the Treasurer's promise to save \$3 billion over four years. What a joke! The bill does none of that. In fact, at the public briefing on the bill the Deputy Under Treasurer told the Economics and Governance Committee that just \$3 million worth of savings has been identified. A sum of \$3 million is a far cry from the \$3 billion that was promised. Those on the other side of the chamber are missing three zeroes. To break it down into conceivable numbers, it is like the Treasurer saying, 'I will save \$100', but then all he saves is \$1. Further, throughout the committee process the Economics and Governance Committee received a mere 15 submissions on the bill. Of those 15 submissions none were from economic or business representatives. It was not worth their time because the bill is a complete farce. There are no savings for anyone to talk about.

This bill is crystal-clear evidence of the Labor government's inability to responsibly manage the state's wallet or to be transparent with Queenslanders, who are the very people counting on this government's now empty and broken promises. The Treasurer said the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 is designed to do exactly what the title says, that is, reduce the burden of debt and deliver savings. The truth is that there is nothing in this bill that will actually reduce Queensland's debt nor increase significant savings in the public purse.

This bill proposes to transfer ownership of the Queensland Titles Registry to another balance sheet and it attributes an inflated dollar value to the registry in an effort to hide the truth of Queensland's economic woes. The government wants to transfer what was once a fiscal liability to the Queensland Future Fund, call it 'Registry Co' and list it as an asset. The Queensland Titles Registry will now be listed on the balance sheet of the Queensland Future Fund and assigned the arbitrary value of \$4.1 billion. No basis for the inflated value of the Titles Registry was given, despite committee members asking for it. The titles offices of New South Wales and Victoria are larger than the Queensland Titles Registry so one would think they would have a higher valuation, but those title offices have a market value of \$2.6 billion and \$2.85 billion. The Treasurer has valued the Queensland Titles Registry at almost double that of the New South Wales and Victorian titles offices, which is actually hard to believe.

**Mr Stevens:** Show us the valuation.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take that interjection. Why is the Treasurer going to such lengths to artificially inflate the value of Queensland's assets? It is to try to deceive the credit rating agencies into giving back to Queensland its AAA credit rating or, worse, avoid another credit rating downgrade. Labor's plan is for Registry Co to offset debt, not pay down debt, in a move to improve the revenue ratio to satisfy credit rating agencies.

In their contributions I heard Labor members spruik that the returns of the fund will pay down the interest, but what they are not saying is that with an annual interest expense of over \$3 billion it is unlikely that the returns of a \$5.7 billion fund can make any significant contribution towards paying down that debt. By what twisted definition is this an attempt to reduce debt? Does the Treasurer truly think that the credit rating agencies will fall for this con job? Maybe he thinks he can fool Queenslanders with this deceitful con job.


Here is a history lesson: Queensland lost its AAA credit rating in 2009 under the Blich government because of Labor's disgraceful economic mismanagement and now they are trying to avoid further downgrades by cooking the books. However, debt continues to grow under this Labor government. It is set to reach almost \$130 billion this financial year. This bill will not help Queenslanders face their increasing economic burdens. Even the fact that the government wants to hide from the scrutiny of the credit rating agencies is proof of their fiscal incompetence because the role of a credit rating agency is to give an accurate reflection of the financial position of the institutes it regulates. If you are hiding from the market then you do not know the true state of your economic affairs. Ultimately, our children and our grandchildren will have to suffer under the burden that Labor has created.

Another concerning aspect of this bill is that it further reduces transparency with the closure of two of the few remaining independent bodies to provide economic oversight and advice. Quite frankly, this state Labor government cannot afford to be any less transparent and needs all of the economic advice it can get. The bill scraps the Queensland Productivity Commission. There are few well-intended reasons that the Labor government could possibly have for scrapping such an important and independent voice in public policy review. This is a blatant and arrogant attempt by the Labor government to further decrease transparency and hide the glaring mistakes of their past, not least of which is declining government productivity under Labor leadership since 2015—if not the past 25 or 30 years.

The Queensland Productivity Commission has been a key voice in proposing policy reforms to government, offering insight and opportunities for improvement through the review of important policy issues such as electricity prices, the NDIS scheme and service delivery to remote Indigenous communities. Maybe the Productivity Commission is getting the boot because they did their job and provided oversight and this Labor government does not like receiving reports that lay bare their failings. When Labor creates an independent statutory body and gets transparency they do not like, they scrap the statutory body that they created. They merge it into a government-run body so that they can control the narrative.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 also proposes to amend the Financial Accountability Act 2009 to remove the need for government to publish public notices in newspapers, instead proposing that such notices are shared on the department's social media pages. To me that shows just how out of touch they are with the needs of Queenslanders, especially those in regional communities. All of the non-printing locations listed by the Treasurer to justify this proposal have locally printed independent newspapers that rely on the publication of public notices as part of their revenue base. The Country Press Association made a submission to the committee on the importance of sharing public information in a public space to inform impacted citizens. The government has a duty to support businesses and communities in regional Queensland and to ensure that everyone has access to public notices.

I regret to inform those sitting on the edge of their seat wondering if there is something redeeming in this bill that there is absolutely nothing positive to talk about. There is nothing in this bill that will reduce debt or increase savings. It is painfully clear that this bill highlights a pure inability on the part of the Labor government to deliver debt reductions or savings to the people of Queensland. This bill is a complete con job and I cannot support it.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I thank the committee, Queensland Treasury and all the stakeholders who contributed to the inquiry into this bill. I support the bill because it is sensible and seeks to protect Queensland from the other mob's ruthless agenda to cut, sack and sell.

At its core, the bill is about removing redundancies such as the PSBA and returning the workforce to the departments in which they belong. When this government was elected, my community was and is still suffering because of the other mob's relentless cuts. Queenslanders and the people of the Sunshine Coast hinterland want the best from their frontline services.

The Palaszczuk Labor government in this bill aims to make sensible, responsible and prudent savings in a way that does not hurt our fellow Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure our frontline services are sustainable and are focused on the needs of the public.


It is no wonder the other mob is angry about us abolishing statutory bodies like the PSBA, because one of those bodies was set up so it could do more privatisation. Everybody knows that the PSBA, the Public Safety Business Agency, was set up so that the other mob could sell it off. The other mob are angry that the PSBA is being abolished because they want to sell it if they ever get back to government. Privatisation is in their DNA, and they are just a disgrace.

Debate, on motion of Mr Skelton, adjourned.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I remind the House of those members on warnings. The members for Buderim, Chatsworth, Burleigh, Kawana, Everton, Maroochydore and Nanango are all on warnings. I also remind members that under our COVID-safe rules it is important that members stay sitting in their allocated seats.

## RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION (TENANTS' RIGHTS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to improve rights for renters, address rental affordability concerns and improve access to safe and secure housing. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Support and Services Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 [\[715\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes [\[716\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[717\]](#).

I have great pleasure in introducing this bill to improve renters' rights in Queensland. The bill amends the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act to address rental affordability and improve access to safe and secure housing. I introduce this bill at a time when the situation for renters is becoming more and more dire. Right now, our rental system is being stretched to its absolute capacity. In Brisbane, vacancy rates are as low as 1.5 per cent. In my electorate, in East Brisbane and Kangaroo Point, vacancy rates are at 1.8 per cent. In Annerley, it is at 1.2 per cent. For people on JobSeeker or the DSP, there are next to zero affordable rental properties and rents are increasing three times faster than wages.

In November, I asked the housing minister if the government would commit to introducing its promised renters' rights reforms within six months. The response, which I table, gave no indication of a time line for the government to introduce these well-overdue reforms.

*Tabled paper:* Answer to question on notice No. 1087 asked on 26 November 2020 [\[718\]](#).

Queenslanders cannot wait any longer. We need urgent action on the growing housing crisis and we need it now. That is why today I am introducing this bill. I am introducing this bill in the context of an enduring imbalance of power and rights between tenants and lessors and an escalating crisis of inequality and financial and housing insecurity which the COVID-19 crisis has only compounded.

Renting in Queensland is no longer uncommon or just a temporary fix. For me and for many of the 1.8 million Queenslanders who rent, it is our only option. Decades of state and federal governments have refused to provide adequate social housing. They have geared our tax system so it is now easier to buy your sixth home than your first. When asked to pick what is more important—the profit margins of wealthy property investors or ensuring everyone has a roof over their heads—governments have picked the side of wealthy property investors again and again.

When I look at who makes up this chamber, it is hard to say that I am surprised by these priorities. There are very few renters in this place. In fact, landlords outnumber renters in Queensland parliament which is a stark reversal to our communities. While across Queensland more than a third of households are renting—in my electorate of South Brisbane nearly 60 per cent of households rent—in here it is just 15 per cent. While nine per cent of Australians are landlords, in here it is 35 per cent. This chamber is increasingly disconnected from everyday Queenslanders. When we have landlords making the laws, it is little surprise the laws are stacked against renters.

I am sure that the ministers and various government members will spend a significant amount of time in this chamber speaking down at me, telling me how my bill demonstrates that I do not understand, but I do not think they understand. They do not seem to understand the impact our current weak rental laws have on Queenslanders.

Renters all across Queensland are struggling. This includes the young woman in South Brisbane I was talking to recently at a pop-up office at the Davies Park Market. A rail on her back balcony had rotted. She could not have friends around for fear that they would accidentally fall off the four-metre-high balcony and onto the concrete below. After six months of asking the owner and real estate agent to get it fixed, to no avail, she stood up for her rights and submitted a notice of breach. Two months later, her lease was not renewed.

Then there was Marilyn, who spoke to my colleague Michael Berkman about her neighbours in St Lucia. A professional migrant family with three young children, they had been renting for a year when they were suddenly told their lease would not be renewed. With no understanding of what they had done wrong, the family were bewildered and embarrassed. While they struggled to find a house they could not afford, they had to make their family home available for inspections with just 24 hours notice each time. Marilyn was shocked to learn that this was all completely legal. 'Are tenants so at the mercy of the whims of the owner?' she asked, and, 'If so, what rights do tenants genuinely have?' It is a good question and one that has gone ignored too long in this place.

It is past time that, with renters comprising the largest proportion of Queenslanders, at 36 per cent of all households, versus 35 per cent mortgage owners and 27 per cent who own their home outright, we acknowledged that our rental laws are outdated and unfair. It is past time that we tipped the scales and began to treat housing as a human right, not a speculative commodity for private profit.

This is something the Greens have been campaigning on for many years alongside community groups and advocates like Tenants Queensland and the Queensland Council of Social Services. As is the case with so many of our policies, it has been really great to see Labor finally get on board. It was great to see the government announce the Open Doors to Rental Reform consultation way back in 2018, and we were excited to hear in 2019 that they would be introducing renters' rights legislation to parliament. Disappointingly, this has not eventuated. We are left wondering whether the government now have cold feet after a well-resourced scare campaign by the real estate lobby. I sincerely hope this is not the case, but the fact remains that we cannot wait any longer. The fact also remains that there were far too many holes in the government's proposed reforms, most conspicuously when it came to regulating rent increases.

For many renters, rental affordability is their greatest concern. The Queensland government's Open Doors to Renting Reform surveys never actually asked respondents about the possibility of caps on rent increases, but a huge number of people tried to raise it in their answers. The report said—

Tenants feel overwhelmingly dissatisfied and stressed about paying rent that they believe is too high. Tenants expressed that they live in a constant state of fear about rent increases, and many expressed the crippling effects of repeated and unsustainable rent increases.

In every major population centre in Queensland, rents have grown faster than the median wage over the last 10 years. The situation is worse in regional Queensland. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 36 per cent of renting households were in rental stress in Queensland. A report from Equity Economics has shown that rental stress in Queensland is projected to grow by 11.4 per cent from February 2020, pre pandemic, to June 2021, post pandemic.

In Central Queensland the situation is significantly worse. Rental stress is projected to grow by 55.2 per cent in the region and homelessness by 31.9 per cent. The Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot shows that for people on JobSeeker or the DSP there are next to zero affordable rental properties. Tenants Queensland reports that this is creating a situation where tenants are more likely to tolerate unlawful or unreasonable behaviour from landlords and property managers for fear of eviction and being forced back into an impossible rental market. This is not a looming rental crisis; we are in

one now. Some 47,036 people in Queensland are waiting on the social housing register. That includes 26,000 families and 16,000 children. There has been a 68 per cent increase since 2017. Homelessness is increasing rapidly.

This bill would bring rent increases in line with inflation and curb arbitrary rent increases which are not justified by improvements to the property. It would limit rental increases to once every two years and only in accordance with CPI, including if there is a period for which the property is not rented or if the current tenants move out and new tenants enter on a new lease. A landlord could seek to increase the rent by more than CPI if the tenant agrees, but if they do not agree the landlord must apply to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to demonstrate that the value of the home has substantially increased.

With record low vacancy rates in Queensland, some people who are looking for a rental are bidding on rental properties to secure them. What that can look like in practice is that a property is listed for \$400 per week rent, but a prospective tenant offers \$500 per week rent as an incentive for the landlord to pick them over other prospective tenants. This is a big issue because it locks out low-income families and can drive up rents.

Under the current Queensland rental law, real estate agents or landlords cannot ask for these bids, but there is nothing stopping them from accepting them if a prospective tenant offers. This bill fixes this by banning landlords and agents from accepting these bids. The provisions under this bill would mean that if a property is listed for \$400 a week rent, it has to be rented for \$400 a week.

As well as banning rent bidding and ending disproportionate and unregulated rent increases, the bill would improve renters' safety, security and enjoyment of their home. It is simply extraordinary that, under Queensland's law, lessors have the power to make a tenant homeless without any given reasons, using no-grounds evictions. Under the existing legal framework, around one in five moves in the private rental market are made involuntarily by the tenant. For vulnerable renters in particular, this can have grave impacts on their housing and financial security as well as their health and safety.

This fear of eviction creates a situation where tenants are hesitant to exercise their rights, including to request repairs to avoid attracting negative attention or retaliation from the lessor. This means a significant number of tenants are living in rental properties that are poorly maintained, including with serious health and safety issues. This bill would remove the ability for no-grounds evictions or evictions for a sale contract by the lessor. All tenants will be entitled to have their lease renewed unless they have breached their lease conditions, including if there is a change of ownership of the property, unless the landlord has reasonable grounds to end the tenancy.

The bill creates two new grounds for a notice to leave. They are if either: the owner or their relative wishes to live in the property for at least a year; or major renovation or repairs will make the premises completely or partly unfit to live in for a period of four weeks, under which circumstances the provider would need to offer the resident another tenancy agreement for the premises after the renovations are completed. It also increases the minimum notice periods required under various grounds for notices to leave, requiring at least: six months notice for owner/relative occupation and major renovations; two months notice for the ending of employment entitlement; and six months notice for the ending of accommodation or housing assistance. Finally, it creates an offence for lessors who issue a notice to leave on false grounds, to prevent landlords from intentionally misusing any of the legal reasons to evict a tenant.

In addition to the pervasive uncertainty about the length and security of one's lease, renters are prevented from putting down roots in their home by unreasonable restrictions on their use of the property. Tenants pay a significant amount of rent to live in a rental property so they should be able to make it feel like home. Existing laws that prevent tenants making minor modifications such as hanging a picture are outdated and do not reflect our current reality, with an increasing number of long-term renters. This bill gives renters additional rights to make minor modifications without first obtaining the landlord's consent, including: installing picture hooks or nails in the premises or resident's room; installing furniture anchors in the premises or resident's room; installing shelving in the premises or resident's room; painting walls of the premises, except in rooming accommodation; and making any other modification to the premises or resident's room prescribed by regulation.

Similarly, for a rented property to truly feel like a tenant's home, they should be given the right to keep their pet, unless the lessor has reasonable grounds to refuse them. Keeping a pet should not be a barrier to finding a home, nor should renters be forced to surrender their pets due to a lack of pet-friendly housing. The right to keep a pet was one of the most popular topics raised during the consultation on renting reforms. Under this bill, tenants would have the right to keep a pet, and parties

would be prohibited from contracting out this right under a residential tenancy agreement. Landlords could only refuse tenants the right to keep a pet on reasonable grounds by order of QCAT, and the onus rests on the landlord to apply for this exemption. Importantly, landlords could not require tenants to pay additional amounts of rent or bond if they wish to keep a pet.

The bill also deals with minimum housing standards for rental properties, noting that the Queensland parliament passed legislation in 2017 that empowers the minister to make regulations regarding minimum standards but that those regulations have not been made to date. In the government's Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation, 60 per cent of respondents to a snap poll agreed that they had seen a rental property with serious safety problems. Some 12 per cent of all respondents reported their current property condition as 'Poor—needs repair or maintenance for health and safety', including mould, broken locks and structural issues.

This bill provides that regulations made about prescribed minimum housing standards for rental properties must cover the standards currently listed in the act as non-compulsory components of such regulation, being: sanitation, drainage, cleanliness and repair of the premises, inclusions or park facilities; ventilation and insulation; protection from damp and its effects; construction, condition, structures, safety and situation of the premises, inclusions or park facilities; the dimensions of rooms in the premises; privacy and security; provision of water supply, storage and sanitary facilities; laundry and cooking facilities; lighting; freedom from vermin infestation; and energy efficiency.

This bill would also help ensure prospective tenants have fair and honest information about the property. If a landlord or real estate agent knows of information about the property that could impact the tenant during their tenancy, they need to share this information with the tenant. The bill would require landlords and real estate agents to disclose: if they have engaged an agent to sell the property; if another mortgagee has engaged in action to take possession of the property; if the lessor is not the owner of the property; details about the electricity network; issues with mould and damp at the property; any known contamination, asbestos, building defects or safety concerns at the property; or if there is a development application or body corporate dispute at the property.

This bill would also ban inappropriate or discriminatory questions by lessors. Our bill stops property owners and real estate agents asking prospective tenants inappropriate or discriminatory questions like: whether or not the tenant has had a legal dispute with a landlord before; whether the tenant had a claim on a previous rental bond before—a dusty fan or light should not impact someone's ability to secure another home; what the tenant's nationality or residency status is; the tenant's passport details, if they have already supplied another photo ID; or for an unredacted bank statement. Both of these changes to information are modelled off legislation the Victorian government has recently passed.

The bill also proposes a number of minor changes to improve tenants' privacy, financial security and safety, including: increasing the notice period for entry to the premises by the lessor for entries other than routine inspections from 24 hours to 48 hours; requiring lessors to forward water bills to the tenant within one month when a tenant is required to pay for water consumption; and removing a lessor's ability to remove a resident under a rooming accommodation agreement without a tribunal order, to bring the rights of tenants in rooming accommodation in line with tenant's rights in other residential rental accommodation.

The changes proposed by this bill are essential steps to shift the imbalance of power between renters and landlords. Our current political and economic system has largely outsourced housing to the private for-profit real estate market, which is inherently vulnerable to monopolies and exploitation of everyday people, particularly those on low incomes.

Meanwhile, our current laws give landlords an inordinate level of power. We need the reforms in this bill if we are to improve housing affordability, address homelessness and housing insecurity, and reduce wealth inequality. In turbulent times, more than ever we need representatives with the courage to act in the interests of the many, not the few. Less than 10 per cent of Australians are landlords, yet our laws undeniably favour their interests. These laws strike a fairer balance for all Queenslanders and still leave landlords with clear rights.

The bill I am introducing today has been compiled with input from Tenants Queensland, QCOSS, the Youth Housing Coalition, Anglicare and many renters for which I am very grateful. With more and more people renting and renting long term, these are crucial reforms for a number of Queenslanders. Amidst increasing inequality, uncertainty and financial stress, it is more important than ever that governments take responsibility for basic rights. Despite the way it has been treated as a private commodity for decades now, housing is undeniably a human right. It is time we started treating it as such.



### First Reading

**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Community Support and Services Committee


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Community Support and Services Committee.

## DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1619, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (12.51 pm), continuing: Thank you, member for South Brisbane, for your contribution. Just to reiterate, we are talking about the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, not the flippant title that will be moved by way of amendment.

The member for Morayfield more or less outlined the abolishment of the PSBA and the reintegration of that workforce into the department. In my electorate alone we are seeing new fire appliances being delivered to our RFB units. They are maintained by QFES. The mechanical units will be returning to QFES. We are seeing continual upgrades and staffing at our general hospital. The brand new police station is on schedule to be open by September. No doubt we will be welcoming some more officers and their families into our beautiful region not long after.

Other economic benefits in terms of savings and helping our Public Service come from infrastructure. Social housing in Smith Street, Nambour, will provide 16 units and is also on schedule. This project is essential to some of my community's most disadvantaged. I will not go into the requirements of construction and the placement of social housing, as these issues are too complex for the other mob to comprehend. It is worth noting that the Newman government presided over not one new dwelling built. In my electorate the investment has been most welcome. When I get around to the many new facilities being supported, I am reminded that Queensland and my region has a government that is getting things done.

The other mob hates this government's policies because when the other mob talk about savings we know what they mean. They mean cutting. When the other mob say that these savings are not enough, what they really mean is that they want to see deep, razor sharp cuts just like when they were in government when they cut 14,000 public servants, including 4,000 health workers, which included 1,800 midwives. They cut infrastructure spend to record lows. The other mob cannot be trusted and is not trusted by the people of Queensland. Their agenda has never changed, and they still will not acknowledge or apologise for it.

In my region alone, not only did they not invest but they slashed 80 hospital and health jobs in the Sunshine Coast district. They sacked 39 QBuild workers as part of 322 sacked statewide just before Christmas 2012. I was saddened to hear the testimony of my colleague the member for Caloundra when he described his personal experience and that of his peers. I acknowledge the service of our corrections officers who truly have one of the most difficult and stressful careers. They are precisely the people who deserve to be respected and protected by government. Obviously the workers compensation bill went some way towards doing that recently, as does this bill.

This is good legislation from good government. The Palaszczuk Labor government is getting things done. The last LNP government was a truly heartless government, and the shadow of it still looms large over our great state. The ghost of that cabinet still haunts the opposition benches. Queenslanders will never forget that their mantra is to cut, sack and sell.

The agenda of the other mob is still painfully apparent. They whinge about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund because it means they cannot touch it—they cannot sell off the Titles Registry. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership and they will not be able to sell it, and

they hate that idea. The other mob hates the idea that Queensland taxpayers will get the full value of the Titles Registry on our balance sheet. By getting that asset on our balance sheet, offsetting debt, it completely removes the other mob's tired old argument for privatisation. The other mob will not be able to write a dodgy report or have a commission of inquiry that recommends it be sold, and they will not be able to waste money on privatisation consultants' fees and jobs for mates.

People in my community do not support privatisation of the state's strategic assets. That is why they chose the Palaszczuk Labor government. Privatisation is in the other mob's DNA. We know this is true because when they were in government they sold Queensland Motorways, they tried to sell our electricity assets and ports, and they wasted \$70 million of taxpayers' money on consultants to try to do it. I am sure that the money found its way into the right pockets.

The other mob are still believing and peddling the same mantra—'Cut, sack and sell. That's how we save.' This is the best our community can expect from those opposite. Under a Palaszczuk Labor government we will always keep our assets. The taxpayer will continue to own the value of the Titles Registry as an asset that can be offset against debt, thereby reducing our net debt. The other mob will say anything to justify their agenda to cut, sack and sell.

**Mr Molhoek:** You're recreating history. You're the asset sellers.

**Mr SKELTON:** I take that interjection. When they were over here, they were making movie references and such.

The other mob complain about deficit even when the federal government, which is part of their broader mob, has deficits as far as the eye can see—10 years into the future. There is no sign of a surplus. The other mob complain about debt even as the federal government's debt increases beyond a trillion dollars. The other mob bleat about debt even though the New South Wales state government has higher debt than Queensland, including when measured on a proportional basis. They prattle on about debt not because they believe debt is a problem but because they want to use it to justify cutting, sacking and selling.

The bill provides for \$3 million in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. That \$3 million might not sound like much to the other mob, but it means a lot to my community and can make a lot of difference when invested. Spending \$2.4 million, co-funded with the Sunshine Coast council, for an adventure playground in Cooroy, for example, is a great way of re-allocating government funds.

Importantly, the \$3 million in direct savings is only one part of the government's broader \$3 billion savings agenda—sensible savings that do not harm Queensland, unlike the other mob's raging cuts agenda. Some other bodies are being abolished. As a former opposition leader said, in a post-COVID world 'business as usual is not going to cut it'. We know how they cut it and so do the people of Queensland. Building Queensland and the Productivity Commission have served Queensland well, but now it is time for their work to continue inside government agencies to help support our recovery and save money.

The bill provides a fee unit model that will reduce costs for Parliamentary Counsel as they go through the annual fee unit indexation. Queenslanders will remember how the other mob set indexation of fees and charges at 3.5 per cent regardless of inflation, meaning fees and charges rose in real terms. Under the other mob, government fees and charges increased by 3.5 per cent every year. Over three years that is a nearly 11 per cent increase in the cost of interacting with government.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has brought fees and charges down—first to 2.25 per cent, then to 1.8 per cent and now to 1.7 per cent, which is the lowest indexation rate in more than a decade. In contrast, the Palaszczuk Labor government has adopted the position that fees and charges are only indexed in line with inflation.

Governments must move with the times and the reality is that people throughout the community increasingly get their news online. It is not good enough for government to put some notice in a newspaper and hope someone reads it. Notices need to be put where people are—and people are online now. Last year News Corp stopped printing daily newspapers in many regional communities. We welcome other newspapers starting but they are not daily. They are generally weekly and/or monthly.

I am pleased that the bill provides an exemption so that in regional communities—like those of my peer the member for Cook and those opposite—where newspapers still operate, notices can still be made in the newspaper. I acknowledge the *Sunshine Valley Gazette*, the *Hinterland Times* and the *Cooroy Rag* in my electorate. It is interesting that members opposite have not understood that the


exemption provides the means for government to use the traditional forms of media like newspapers. How wonderful to hear them supporting independent media outlets. I look forward to working with them on an inquiry into media ownership.

The fact that this government can still find savings whilst at the same time powering the Queensland economy faster than any other state is testimony to the sound advice from Treasury and the hard work of the state government and its various departments. The complete lack of any coherent plan from the other mob on budget matters and the fact that it took 178 days for them to ask a question that relates is testimony to the fact that they have no idea.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr SKELTON:** I take that interjection, member for Logan. Well done to whoever it was on the opposition bench who posed that question. I commend the bill to the House.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.00 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the bill before the House which is so wrongly titled. It is supposedly the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, but the only bit of truth in that is '2021'. I have no idea where they got the rest of it from. The LNP opposition firmly opposes this bill. Firstly, the name of the bill is misleading. This omnibus bill, which deals with 18 separate acts and regulatory instruments across many portfolios, is just a smokescreen designed to cover the fact there is actually no real debt reduction.

Instead, what we see in this bill is the assignment of a value to the Queensland Titles Registry, creating Registry Co and bringing that asset value to the Queensland Future Fund. This incompetent Labor government has valued the Queensland Titles Registry at \$4.1 billion but they have no clue at all how they got that valuation. New South Wales and Victoria leased their titles offices for a value of \$2.6 billion in New South Wales and \$2.85 billion in Victoria. No details have been provided as to why Queensland, with a much smaller titles office than New South Wales or Victoria, can miraculously just pluck a figure of \$4.1 billion—

**Mr Mickelberg:** It doesn't make sense.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection. It does not make sense. The establishment of Registry Co is being used to offset debt. I will tell you another thing that is offsetting debt at the moment: the sale of Queensland government land assets which is happening across this great state of ours. A beautiful big country place—

**Mr Millar:** Berrigurra.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:**—Berrigurra has just sold for over \$30 million. A couple of hours ago the Queensland state owned farm Redvale in my electorate of Nanango was sold under the hammer because the Labor government is flogging off our assets. They have sold that property. Redvale is prime agricultural land that I saved from being sold by the Bligh government. It was on the Bligh government's books. That is another reason I entered this place, because those opposite only know one thing and that is how to sell off our assets. They have done it today. Redvale farm in Kingaroy went under the hammer. Look at them over there! Their heads are all down because they know the only way a Labor government can pay down debt is by flogging off assets. How can we support the agricultural industry going forward if we are going to flog off all of the research assets? Give me a break! Today in Kingaroy Redvale went under the hammer. It was a beautiful Queensland government owned property. I can see that the member for Ipswich West has his head down. He is mortified because as leader of the agricultural sector—he should be the minister for agriculture—it would not have been sold. I can continue my angst about the sale of Redvale, but we know that the only government that has ever sold Queensland assets is the Labor government.

There has simply been no effort to reduce debt. In relation to savings, in his first reading speech the Treasurer stated that there would be \$3 billion in savings over four years. I can see a group of schoolchildren in the gallery from Fairholme College. I am not sure what year they are, but I dare say that those girls will be part of paying off the state Labor debt for generations to come. It will not be these Fairholme girls: it will be their grandchildren who will still be paying off the Palaszczuk Labor debt. To all of those hardworking Fairholme girls—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Order! Pause the clock. Members across both sides of the chamber will cease their interjections.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** What a great school Fairholme College in Toowoomba is. I acknowledge all of those girls in the gallery. The future is yours for the taking here in Queensland—we just have to get rid of the Labor government so you can do it!

The Treasurer did not state what savings would be measured against. At the public briefing the Deputy Under Treasurer could only commit to \$3 million in savings over the next four years. They are talking about \$3 billion worth of interest on the current Labor government's debt but they are only planning to reduce debt by \$3 million. It does not make sense. I am quite sure the year 9 economics class from Fairholme, is probably thinking, 'What?' It is called 'Labornomics'.

**Mr Mickelberg:** It's a new term.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is a new term. It does not make sense. The bill before the House today is a complete and utter con job. It is a con job to try to make all of those Labor members of the backbench think, 'My goodness me! We have no talking notes about what Labor is doing,' so all of their talking points are just about what the LNP is not doing.

**Mr Mickelberg:** Incapable of independent thought.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection. They are completely incapable of independent thought. You could tell that by the Deputy Premier's space announcement this morning—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. The member for Pine Rivers will cease her interjections.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is a bit like the Deputy Premier's announcement today about Gilmour Space Technologies. It was like reading my press announcement during the election campaign. I actually really quite enjoyed it. I do not think he even changed any words. He just said, 'Deb Frecklington came up with this great idea, so let's back it.' Well done on that, Deputy Premier. That is the only thing I will praise you for. The Deputy Premier is part of the cabinet that has agreed to bring a bill before the House with a long title that does not even make sense. There is no debt reduction; there is no savings plan. It is a complete and utter con job.

In the short time I have left I really want to talk about the Queensland Productivity Commission. I only wish that the good Speaker Pitt was sitting in the chair—no disrespect to you, Madam Deputy Speaker—because it was Treasurer Curtis Pitt who brought in the Queensland Productivity Commission. It was his baby—a Labor government policy to make sure we could have openness and transparency. Then the Queensland Productivity Commission did the job they were employed to do; that is, report on the incompetence of the Labor government. That is exactly what they did, and guess what the Palaszczuk government has now decided to do? 'Oops! We don't like that report so we're going to rip it up. We're going to bring it in-house and we're going to call it red-tape reduction.' By the way, there has been no red-tape reduction since the former Newman government because we know that those opposite have just added more and more layers of bureaucracy. They got rid of the one commission that was working towards good governance, openness and transparency—


**Mr McDonald:** Introduced by them.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** They introduced it. They actually were reporting on how ridiculous this government is, so they get sacked. What sort of good government is that? Seriously.

Then we have the word that has not been spoken in this chamber ever since she left—that is, Trad. Building Queensland was Jackie Trad's baby. What are they doing to that? They are wiping her off the slates of the Palaszczuk government's books. They are chopping that. There is nothing left. I can see the ministers over there saying, 'I know. She was on my team but I'm now stepping up.' They are getting rid of the legacy of the former member for South Brisbane.

We have heard all of the country members on this side of the House talking about what the Palaszczuk government are doing to our regional newspapers. It shows how out of touch they are. They have absolutely no clue as to what the effect will be. We have incredible local papers that are popping up everywhere. I have to give a shout-out to the well-respected tattoo artist whose shop is right beside my electorate office. He and his partner are very relieved that the amendment in relation to the inking has been taken out.

This is a complete con job. It is a terrible bill. It certainly should not pass this House. There are no savings and there is no debt reduction plan, so the bill should be named something else.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.10 pm): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 which implements a range of debt reduction and savings measures identified as part of the Palaszczuk government's savings and debt plan. This bill makes sensible, considered savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will help ensure our record numbers of frontline services are sustainable as they support the needs of Queenslanders. We are continuing to support Queensland jobs, households, assets and our economy.

The Queensland Future Fund, or QFF, supports our government's economic plan to prudently manage debt. The COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review recognised a \$5.67 billion contribution to the QFF to be made by 30 June 2021 and which was reflected in our 2020-21 budget. This contribution included the Titles Registry that has a preliminary valuation of \$4.2 billion and \$1 billion from the surplus assets held to support the state's defined benefit superannuation scheme liability along with other investments. Importantly, there are legal protections that ensure the QFF's investments can only be used to reduce the state's debt.

This bill protects the Titles Registry against privatisation by a future LNP government. It is interesting to note that the non-government statement of reservation in the committee report mentions that the New South Wales titles office was valued at \$2.6 billion. In 2017 the NSW Liberal government flogged off and privatised the New South Wales titles registry for the bargain basement price of \$2.6 billion—right at the same time they sold off a majority stake of New South Wales taxpayers' electricity networks for a tick over \$20 billion. But the LNP were not content with that. That was not enough and they are not finished. Only last month the New South Wales Premier revealed they will be at it again—privatising taxpayer owned assets by pushing ahead with the sale of the little that remains of public assets like motorways and electricity assets.

**Mr Crandon:** You know that we're in Queensland.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I take the member's interjection. It is just like the LNP to mention New South Wales in their own dissenting report in the committee report for this bill in this parliament—the gold standard. They want to flog it off. They just cannot help themselves. It is amazing. This is pretty special.

It is clear that the LNP will privatise anything that moves, and if it does not move they will push it. Indeed, in their submission on this bill, the Queensland Law Society expressed concerns about the prospect of privatisation of the Titles Registry based on the experiences interstate such as in New South Wales, but in Queensland they welcomed 'the commitments made when introducing this Bill that the Titles Registry will remain in public hands', given that 'the Titles Registry is a vital service to the Queensland public'.

Through this bill, we are committed to ensuring benefits will keep coming back to Queenslanders. Those opposite bridle at this, because when the LNP talk debt and savings what they mean is cuts and asset sales. It is no wonder the LNP want to complain about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund, because it means they cannot sell the Titles Registry. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership and it will not be able to be sold, and those opposite hate this idea. The LNP simply cannot abide by the idea that Queensland taxpayers will get the full value of the Titles Registry on the public balance sheet. They will not be able to write dodgy reports or conduct commissions of inquiry that recommend it be sold off, and they will not be able to waste money on privatisation consultants and fees for all their LNP mates. People in my community do not support privatisation of the state's strategic assets. We know this is true because when they were last in government they wanted to sell our electricity assets and ports, and they wasted \$70 million of taxpayers' money on consultants to try to do it.

I am particularly pleased to support this bill given it abolishes the Public Safety Business Agency, the PSBA. Everybody knows that the Public Safety Business Agency was set up specifically so that the LNP could sell it off. The LNP are opposing this bill and the abolition of the PSBA because they still want to sell it should they ever get back into government.

Building Queensland and the Productivity Commission have served Queensland well. Going forward, their work will best support the people of Queensland by being directly inside government to help support our recovery and save money. The Queensland Productivity Commission is being refocused to the current economic challenges facing Queensland in a post-COVID world, developing policies to promote economic recovery and productivity growth. The QPC is being integrated into Queensland Treasury, including the establishment of a new Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. The new office will retain the in-depth and longer-term focus of the QPC which will support the development of expert economic policy advice. This move into the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction within Queensland Treasury will strengthen capabilities and enable more integrated and enhanced economic policy advice.


This bill protects Queensland against LNP cuts by setting out sensible savings, which sits in stark contrast to the damaging cuts the LNP would inflict on our great state were they given the chance again. The LNP will do anything to justify their agenda to cut, sack and sell. They complain about deficit, even when the Morrison government has deficits as far as the eye can see—10 years into the future—with no sign of a surplus. They complain about debt, even as the Morrison government's debt increases beyond a trillion dollars. The LNP complain about debt, even though the NSW Liberal government has a higher debt than Queensland, including when measured on a proportional basis. They complain about debt, not because debt is a problem but because they want to use it to justify cutting, sacking and selling.

No Queenslander forgets the Newman LNP government's sacking of 14,000 Queenslanders after telling the very same workers they had nothing to fear. They sacked 4,400 essential health workers across the state, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. In our local community, the LNP sacked 124 workers from West Moreton health—the second biggest employer in Ipswich at the centre of the fastest-growing healthcare region in Queensland. Local community groups which were once supported by Queensland Health were also abandoned, with \$120 million ripped from the state's funding. This year we welcomed 33 new intern doctors at Ipswich Hospital, and soon they will be joined by an intake of nurse graduates. We back our Queensland workers in health and education. We do not sack them. We back our community by investing in frontline services.

The LNP also sacked 25 local workers as part of their plan to sell off Queensland's energy assets which was part of the so-called Strong Choices program. This included Swanbank E power station, which was mothballed and prepped for sale. It is the same station that only yesterday, thanks to our commitment to continued public ownership, was able to step up and help supply electricity to local homes and businesses as energy workers right across our state heeded the call for Queensland.

This bill is important to Queensland. It is important because it protects Queensland from the LNP agenda to cut, sack and sell. These measures will contribute to the achievement of the government's savings and debt plan and, importantly, will be delivered without cutting frontline services, sacking public servants or selling Queensland assets.

All Queenslanders know that when it came to the health challenge of COVID-19, the Palaszczuk government kept us safe. Because of that strong health response, we have been able to focus on getting our economy going earlier and more strongly than other states, territories and countries. Our economy has rebounded strongly and this bill will position Queensland in a stronger financial position for the future. It is the next step in continuing our nation-leading strong, safe recovery. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. I note that out of the 15 submissions received, hardly any were supportive of this bill. First, I want to highlight a matter which deeply concerns me and those in rural and regional Queensland. That is the amendment to the Financial Accountability Act 2015 so that government paid public notices will no longer appear in print. There are 45 community owned newspapers in Queensland and, importantly, this government is cutting the printing of government advertisements as well as Queensland Health advertisements. These newspapers rely heavily on the printing of government notices to continue to operate. For those in remote and regional communities who do not follow the digital highway, these hard copy editorials provide vital information and local news.

In my electorate alone there are three independent newspapers: the *Cairns Local News*, the *Express* and the *Wet Tropic Times*. They have been established to fill the void left by the closure of the large print corporations in regional Queensland. These newspapers have invested financially in their capacity to expand their reach and provide vital information to the public. The combined circulation of these three newspapers is 31,000 readers. These papers not only provide local jobs but they also invest back into their communities through sponsorship and charity donations. Two of these papers are free for locals and rely on advertising from businesses and the state government to cover their costs. By stopping the expenditure in these locally owned papers, the government will be aiding the loss of jobs, information and economic activity in rural and regional Queensland.

This bill is supposed to be about debt reduction. However, I really believe, as many speakers on this side have been saying, that the way to go about that is not to sell our assets but to build our assets. Both sides of government have a very, very poor track record in retaining and regenerating assets to pay down debt. In 2017 the Beattie government sold off the Golden Casket for \$530 million. In 2009 the Bligh government sold Forestry Plantations Queensland for \$603 million. Now it generates \$200 million a year of income that could have been going back to the state. The Bligh government also

sold Queensland Motorways for \$7 billion, and now it generates toll revenue of \$394 million. That is \$394 million that could have been going back to the state and paying off debt. They also sold the Port of Brisbane for \$2.3 billion and now it is raking in \$157 million a year.

They also sold Queensland Rail's coal component for \$7 billion. That was raking in \$1.8 billion a year. Could you imagine still having Queensland Rail in Queensland's hands and seeing \$1.8 billion going to pay off debt or going to our hospitals, our schools or our roads? However, because this was sold off, we do not have these finances anymore. This is a lesson for the House with regard to this bill. If the government wants to get rid of debt, they have to retain their assets; they have to build their assets.


On top of that, the Beattie government also privatised the retail arm of our energy sector. Back then we were told that this form of privatisation would increase competition. As a result of that, it did increase competition, but electricity prices have tripled. As we look back at the privatisation of the retail arm of our energy sector, we see that the LNP backed it and passionately spoke in favour of it. More than that, they were pleading that more should be sold, that our energy generators should be sold.

In 2012 the Bligh government sold off those assets and now we have less income returning to the Queensland economy. At that time they went from holding 53 seats down to seven seats. Then the Newman government came in and they sold \$1.5 billion worth of shares in the coal component of Queensland Rail—a stake in Queensland Rail, so they sold it. However, when they went to the next election they were going to sell our energy generators. They then found their numbers were reduced from 78 seats to 42. It is a good lesson to understand that any government that sells assets is going to be punished by their electorates—by the voters, the people of Queensland. It is not good business. There is billions and billions of dollars that could have been going to hospitals, schools and roads that we do not have because those assets were sold to multinational corporations. If the government wants to pay off debt it has to build assets.

At the time of the stock market crash in October 1987, Australia was struggling; we were doing it tough; there were bankruptcies. However, North Queensland was thriving and booming because we just finished the construction of the Burdekin Dam. Since the construction of the Burdekin Dam we have not really seen any major infrastructure project here in Queensland, apart from the tunnels, the footbridges and sport stadiums in Brisbane. We have not seen any major infrastructure, particularly water infrastructure—we have seen the Paradise Dam, which is good money well spent and is bringing a return. It is good to finally see money being spent in rural and regional Queensland. That is what we need: infrastructure development. We have wonderful opportunities.

It has been 30 years since the last major water infrastructure project which was the Burdekin Dam. There are great opportunities. The Hughenden Irrigation Project will provide numerous jobs in those regions. Likewise, there are other projects such as the Big Rocks Weir, which has the opportunity to facilitate year-round operation of the meatworks, and the North Johnstone transfer project. These are just some of the projects that will help stimulate the economy, add growth and also provide an economic boost to those regions.

We do not have to sell assets. I do not know what this bill is really about, but I am very concerned about what it will do with regard to the printing of newspapers in my electorate because this is going to be devastating for those rural and regional communities, particularly the elderly who rely on these publications to view those state government public notices. As I said, I do not know what this bill is about. It is very, very difficult to understand what it is going to do except make things worse, not better. There is nothing in here that will provide for infrastructure development or jobs for our region. I do not support this bill.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.29 pm): I thank the member for Hill; I thought that was a fantastic contribution! I am happy to enlighten him in a few areas in relation to this bill. Naturally, I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. There are a few things I would like to clarify, but I will do that as I work my way through my notes.

First and foremost, this bill will implement a range of debt reduction and savings measures identified as part of the Palaszczuk government's savings and debt plan. These include: establishing the legislative mechanism to transfer the Queensland Titles Registry to the Queensland Future Fund; and abolishing or restructuring a number of public entities. Therein lies the purpose. The bill implements public sector efficiency and modernisation measures including: allowing digital advertising to replace print advertising; and establishing a fee unit model to manage government fees in the future. The bill also includes amendments to the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019.

This legislation provides the mechanism for the Queensland Titles Registry to be transferred to the Queensland Future Fund through the Debt Retirement Fund. The inclusion of the Queensland Titles Registry in the Debt Retirement Fund will improve the state's debt-to-revenue ratio when assessed by rating agencies and demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's measured and responsible plan to invest today to pay down state debt into the future. Together Queensland Industrial Union of Employees and Titles Registry employees have been consulted on provisions contained in the bill relating to employee transfer.

The Queensland Law Society has reviewed a consultation draft of the bill and has not raised significant concerns. QLS's primary interest is in ensuring certainty regarding the integrity and security of the Titles Registry under the new arrangements as the safeguard of landownership under Queensland's Torrens system of landownership and transfer by title.

The bill abolishes and restructures a number of public entities as part of the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to deliver savings and improve efficiencies in government. The amalgamation and restructure of public entities into existing government departmental structures means their specialised expertise, roles and, most importantly, responsibilities will be transferred to relevant departments to better drive outcomes for the community and for the public sector.

This bill abolishes the Queensland Productivity Commission as the statutory entity, allowing for the integration of QPC's functions into Treasury as the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction to support the government's productivity agenda. Treasury has consulted with government agencies and appropriate unions. This bill reintegrates the Public Safety Business Agency into the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. Due to the nature of these amendments, widespread community consultation was not undertaken; however, extensive consultation has been undertaken with affected employees and their respective unions.

This bill abolishes Building Queensland and its board and integrates Building Queensland's staff, assets, resources and records into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The associated amendments to the Queensland Industry Participation Policy Act 2011 enable the integration of Building Queensland into the department. The bill does not change the substance of existing provisions within the Queensland Industry Participation Policy Act. This presents an opportunity to streamline processes, reduce administrative overheads and, more importantly, provide a more coordinated infrastructure advisory and assurance function within government.

Consultation has been undertaken with relevant government agencies, Building Queensland and the Public Service Commission. The bill effects changes to the governance arrangements of the agency by abolishing the board of the agency and transferring the board's existing functions, reporting and accountabilities to the Insurance Commissioner as the chief executive officer of the agency, therefore replacing the current chief executive officer on commencement of the bill.

The important work of the National Injury Insurance Scheme in providing lifetime treatment, care and support for hundreds of participants who have been seriously injured in motor vehicle accidents will continue unabated. Further savings will be realised by allowing digital advertising to replace print advertising in terms of legislation that requires advertising by proposing amendments to the Financial Accountability Act 2009. The measure is intended to reduce the quantity of print advertising and publications by government agencies and to reduce associated advertising and publication costs to government agencies. This amendment is necessary to modify the operation of existing print publication and advertising requirements, and authorisations are set out in the legislation.

I make it clear—I note the member for Hill has departed—that there are exemptions to the advertising changes. These changes include: communities served by regional newspapers—it does help if people read the information to allay their concerns as a lot of these issues have been addressed; public health and safety matters; matters relating to courts and tribunals; firearms amnesties; and matters relating to specific locations or people.

The amendments to the Acts Interpretation Act 1954 will introduce a fee unit model which will streamline the annual process of indexing regulatory fees and reduce administrative inefficiencies for agencies and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. A fee unit model for regulatory fees will save considerable time by enabling these fees to be indexed in a manner similar to penalty units.

Government indexation seeks to maintain the value of the fee over time relative to the anticipated increase in associated costs. The principles for fees and charges policy outlines the government's indexation policy and applies to fees set by departments and statutory bodies or agencies, except for specified exemptions. The fee unit model will streamline this annual process, providing for indexation of the fee unit rather than amending hundreds of pages of regulation.



From 1 January 2022, all in-scope agencies will be required by government policy to display their regulated fees as a fee unit, not a dollar amount, unless they have received an exemption. This will require all agencies with regulated fees to amend their relevant regulations to reflect the change ready for the next fee indexation date, being 1 July 2022 for most agencies, or, for those with an alternative indexation date, their first occurrence post 1 July 2022. Removing these administrative inefficiencies for all agencies will realise substantial financial savings across government as hundreds of hours of staff time and effort can be fully redirected to focus on service delivery in other areas.


The bill provides for millions in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and ancillary costs. These direct savings are only one part of the Palaszczuk government's broader \$3 billion savings agenda. These are measured and calculated initiatives focused on reducing our state's debt. This approach highlights one of the major disparities between the Palaszczuk government and the LNP.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that you would be very keen to hear that in government the LNP told workers there was absolutely nothing to fear. Some 14,000 public servants were sacked. Around 4,400 health workers lost their jobs, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. The LNP slashed \$288 million in employment programs, including the very successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work, and then delivered the worst year for jobs growth in Queensland since the early 1990s.

The LNP axed \$368 million in grants to the department of communities to support Queenslanders in need, particularly in regional areas, and removed another \$120 million in funding to vitally important community groups. Some \$60 million in grants and subsidies to local government was cut. The LNP axed the essential Tenants Advisory Service. The cutting of air subsidies to Cape York was absolutely fatal to so many opportunities up there. There was a \$14 million cut to business development programs, particularly in regional areas.

Whilst these are just a fraction of the appalling initiatives employed by the LNP, they highlight one of the major disparities between the Palaszczuk government and the LNP: the LNP believe in destroying the economy and people's lives whilst attempting to rebuild it; the Palaszczuk government employs sensible, measured and calculated responses to debt reduction while maintaining the essential services fundamental to Queensland's positive growth.

I acknowledge the hard work of our Treasurer, the member for Woodridge, and thank the Economics and Governance Committee for its work in relation to this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.38 pm): This bill is not just a con; it is an absolute disgrace. It shows the Labor government as a party of charlatans, fraudsters and masters of trickery. This is all smoke and mirrors. It is not going to reduce debt. Those opposite claim to be making this bill about debt reduction, but spending keeps going up and debt keeps going up. It was promised to be going up by \$4 billion before the election and then in the budget it went up by \$28 billion—a seven-times blowout. Then those opposite bring in this bill, which, as I said, is a con, and still the spending is going up and still the debt is going up. So what is this all about? It is an absolute disgrace that those opposite come in here and make speeches about how they are going to be reducing debt when the facts show everything to the contrary, even though they are subsuming some existing bodies into the Public Service, destroying the independence of the Queensland Productivity Commission and the work it does and getting rid of Building Queensland, which I think is all about the exorcism of Jackie Trad from the Labor caucus, because that was her baby. Building Queensland was Jackie Trad's baby and now it is going, just like Jackie has already gone.

**Mr McDonald:** Gone, baby, gone!

**Mr KRAUSE:** I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. It is worthy to reflect too that we have heard the sad news about the passing of Sir Llew Edwards—a great treasurer of this state, and I know that the member for Bonney is a relative of Sir Llew and is in the gallery at the moment. This is the type of measure Sir Llew would never have countenanced because he knew all about good financial management. Not only did Sir Llew and the coalition government manage to build things in Queensland when he was in office; they also managed to balance the budget and to build a strong economy, to build the assets, to get people working and to keep our finances in a stable position. This bill is a con and a master of trickery—smoke and mirrors—which we have seen for the entire six years, or whatever it is, of government from the Labor Party.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It is great to get members of the government chortling away over there because you know you are getting under their skin, especially when the member for Maryborough starts saying a few things. I want to reflect on some of the contributions from those members opposite, because they stand in the chamber and say their government is reducing debt and reducing spending but in the same sentence almost sometimes go on to object to any reduction in spending that happened to occur under other governments. Those opposite cannot have it both ways. They cannot say they are reducing spending and then say they are never going to cut anything or reduce spending anywhere, because it is completely contradictory. This has been coming from every member of the government and it is a con, but it is labornomics in action—keep spending more, increase debt by \$28 billion more than you promised in the budget and then claim to be reducing debt at the same time. Something does not add up. What is it? Something does not add up, and that is that this bill is a con. That is what does not add up in this equation.

I want to talk about one particular issue, and that is public advertising in newspapers. Other members have spoken about it, but that is a disgrace as well. It is a kick in the pants to small businesses and local newspapers in my electorate and electorates all over the state that have lost their large News Corporation dailies just in the last 12 months, and that was a blow. Last year I am pretty sure that members of the government stood in here and empathised with all of those communities that had lost their News Corp publications and said how terrible it was for the communities. So what do they do? Bring in a bill to get rid of newspaper advertising in the small journals that are still going. It is the hypocrisy writ large of the government when it comes to not only reducing debt but also supporting small businesses, and that is just one example.

In my electorate the *Fassifern Guardian & Tribune* is holding the government to account for not only people in the Fassifern and Scenic Rim region but also Ipswich. It expanded its operations after the *Queensland Times* left the scene in Ipswich. It is doing a great job. There is the *Beaudesert Times*, the *Jimboomba Times*—the member for Logan often features in there—the *Scenic News*, the *Tamborine Times*, the *Tamborine Bulletin*, the *Moreton Border News*, the *Canungra Times*, the *Beaudesert Bulletin* and the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. I know it is a large publication owned by News Corp, but it is also servicing that area of Queensland.

The fact that the government is abolishing the need for newspaper advertising in these publications is a disgrace. A lot of people do not access the internet, especially not for things relating to the government. They access the internet to check their email and sometimes to look at Facebook. I know that there is going to be digital advertising through that, but they should also be entitled to receive that news through other means by which they receive news generally, and that is through their local newspapers and through the ads that should be placed in them to get the word out about what the government is doing. It is not only a kick in the pants and a kick in the guts for those small businesses that run newspapers; it is also a lack of accountability mechanism. It is the reduction of an accountability mechanism from a government that is all too willing to hide things away even though it was elected under the guise of transparency, accountability and openness. That went by the wayside many years ago when it comes to this Labor government.

The Queensland Productivity Commission is just another example of that. It was established by Curtis Pitt when he was treasurer in 2015. At the time I thought it was pretty much a mechanism to try and nobble the Queensland Competition Authority, which had made some decisions over the years that I think both governments were not happy with, so there was another body set up to do some work in that field. It provided some advice, exercising its independence, which I do not think the government liked, and that was the last of it getting assigned jobs to do things. It sat idle for years before this bill came to pass, stripping it of its independence. However, all of those functions, as I understand it, are being put into Treasury. I do not see where savings are being made in that role if everything is being transferred into Treasury.

The contributions by members on this side of the House, including those that I have heard from the crossbench, are clear enough in explaining why this bill is a con. It will not reduce debt. The only thing that will reduce debt is to reduce spending or to increase taxes or other means, but those opposite cannot live in this fairyland, which the government appears to be, where they increase spending and say they are going to decrease debt at the same time. That just does not make sense. The ordinary Queenslander out there knows that it does not make sense to increase spending and then say you are going to reduce debt in the same sentence. That is why we are opposing this bill because it is a con, a fraud on all Queenslanders and a disgraceful effort by a government to try and cover up its reckless financial management over the last years of government, and that is only going to get worse in the next

three years of government. I will make that prediction right now. We will be standing here in three years time facing a far worse economic and fiscal situation for this state than we are right now because of the actions of this government and its recklessness in office.

**Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.47 pm): I like following clairvoyants; they might be able to tell us the future. I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 will implement a range of debt reduction and savings measures identified as part of the Palaszczuk government's savings and debt plan. These include establishing the legislative mechanism to transfer the Queensland Titles Registry to the Queensland Future Fund and abolishing or restructuring a number of public entities. The bill implements public sector efficiency and modernisation measures, including allowing digital advertising to replace print advertising and establishing a fee unit model to manage government fees.

This is where it gets interesting, because the problem the LNP has with this bill is the Titles Registry. It is salivating because that is something that it wanted to sell off if it got back into power in 2020. It saw what happened to its friends in New South Wales who sold it off at a bargain price, so it was salivating. One thing I have noticed from listening to the speeches today from my opponents is that they love to put public money in private pockets. That is what they love. They love to look after their mates, and that is what this is all about. That is why they are opposing this bill. They know that this is a good bill, but in their DNA they do not want to support it because they know that they cannot sell off the Titles Registry to their mates. That is the problem. If we listen to them, they say that they are the economic managers of the state and they talk about how good they are. If they were any good, they would not just have 32 seats in this House.

It is interesting listening to those on the other side say they should be in government. Are they saying Queenslanders are fools? My impression is that they are saying Queenslanders made a mistake. In all the years I have been in politics I have found that the voters do not usually get it wrong. They get it right. Those opposite are on 32 seats. They are like lemmings going off a cliff. Let me tell members what happened the last time the LNP were in power in Queensland. Let me put the coat on and get in the TARDIS. Let us go back to 2012-2015.

**Mr Harper:** Do we need to go back to that horror story again? It was a nightmare.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I will take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. It was Newman on Elm Street. It was supposed to be Freddy Krueger, only it was Campbell Newman coming out and attacking the people of Queensland. Let us have a look at what these economic managers did when they were in power. I am talking about the Wide Bay Burnett area. There were 345 hospital and health jobs, including 120 nurses and midwives, taken out of the Bundaberg, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Gayndah, Mundubbera, Eidsvold, Monto and Biggenden hospitals. There were 19 QBuild workers sacked in Maryborough and Bundaberg. They were part of 322 QBuild workers sacked across this state. Those opposite sit there and say they are economic managers. They do not understand what damage that did to regional and rural Queensland. This government is a very good government for regional and rural Queensland.

Let us continue to look at what happened in the Freddy Newman era. They sacked 14,000 public servants. We can sit here and talk about it, but it was very different when you were a part of it and saw the horror of what families went through. I remember, in particular, friends of mine who were long-serving public servants who had to go home to their partners and tell them that they had lost their jobs. Those opposite do not represent regional communities anymore. Many of these public servants are giving people: they give to their local sporting organisation or are involved in their local historical society. They are public servants because they give back to their local community. We lost those people in our community. Our community is starting to rebuild. It has taken many years to rebuild the trust in regional Queensland.

I was with the member for Hervey Bay at the Fraser Coast Regional Show. Those opposite talk about being economic managers, but there were not too many at their stall at the show. There were 4,400 health workers sacked. One of the reasons I stood in the 2015 election was because the LNP cut the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. It is a fantastic program. I have seen young people in my electorate get employed through Skilling Queenslanders for Work. It is a top program. Those opposite do not care about employment. In the 2020 election they were going to slash \$368 million in grants to the Department of Communities to support Queenslanders; \$120 million in funding to community groups from Queensland Health. They cut health programs. We know they have no heart. When I tour the state and talk to councils, they cannot talk enough about how good the Palaszczuk government has been to local government. The mayor of Boulia tells me what a great program Works for Queensland is.

Those opposite axed the Tenants Advisory Service. They cut the Premier's Literary Awards, which was a couple of hundred thousand dollars. That is how lousy those opposite are. They come in here and lecture us about being economic managers. Those opposite shut schools. It was distressing to read that they cut \$106,000 from the Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland. Shame! They cut \$100,000 from the Pyjama Foundation; \$100,000 from the Community Emergency Support Centre; \$46,000 from Bravehearts—and they tell us they want to protect young people!

**Mr Harper:** Heartless!

**Mr SAUNDERS:** They are heartless. They cut \$47,000 from the Centre Against Sexual Violence. They cut \$33,000 from the Banana Shire Emergency Accommodation Support Centre. Where was the former member for Callide, the Deputy Premier, when that happened? He had a lot to say over the years, but I do not think he would have had too much to say about that. They cut \$200,000 from Vision Australia. My family has had to use Vision Australia.

Turning to the Public Safety Business Agency, I reiterate what the minister said. Its employees are happy to see the end of the PSBA. They were buying vehicles for Queensland police that were not suitable for the police. They were buying vehicles for other government departments that were not suitable. My friends in the PSBA cracked a beer and are very happy they are going back now to the relevant departments. They are happy because they know they have tenure of employment now.


Those opposite want to privatise the correction centres in this state. It is in their DNA. The reason they want to do that is that, just like in America, it is more public money in their mates' pockets. We have some of the best correctional centres in the world. They are well run and well staffed and we have great officers.

**Mr Hunt:** Hear, hear!

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I take that interjection from the member for Caloundra with whom I worked closely with corrections. Our correction centres are about rehabilitation. They are about getting people ready to get back on the street after they have done their time. The model those opposite want to put forward is putting money in their mates' pockets and makes the officers beg for their wages. We saw that before the 2020 election.

The Palaszczuk government has been one of the best governments that we have had for regional Queensland. I travel regional Queensland in my new role and talk to many regional Queenslanders, and they are telling me they have not seen a government as good as this in many years. The member for Pine Rivers also travels regional Queensland in her role and talks to many people. Everywhere we go we look around at the road infrastructure and what we are spending in regional Queensland. Those opposite came out with a chainsaw and cut RoadTek in half.

We are reinvesting in regional Queensland. We are supporting jobs in regional Queensland. We are supporting health care in regional Queensland. We are looking after our schools in regional Queensland. We are the economic managers of this state. We are not trying to put public money into private pockets. Those opposite cut, sack and sell. It runs through their veins. It is imprinted on them. It is in their DNA—one does not need the CSI to come and look at that, we can all see it. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.57 pm): Whilst I am supportive of measures that deliver cost savings and enable Queensland's economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19, in particular Noosa's economic resurgence, I am concerned when there is a risk to independence and transparency, especially when the proposed savings appear to be minimal or hard to find. The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, as has already been heard, covers multiple realms. I turn firstly to the proposed repealing of the Building Queensland Act 2015 and the abolition of Building Queensland, BQ. This organisation provides independent expert advice on major infrastructure and this bill intends to integrate BQ staff, assets, records, resources and liabilities into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning.

Whilst there may be good intentions of enhancing the department's ability to provide infrastructure advice and assurance capability, there remains the possibility that staff will be disseminated throughout the organisation with their capabilities and extensive historical knowledge lost or diluted. If expert advice is the keystone to ensuring effective decision-making, we need to ensure that the current BQ staff are deployed in a manner that retains their expertise in government. Assurance is also needed that the current reporting functions of BQ will be easily defined in the existing capital program.

With concern I note the bill also intends to abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission, QPC, the state's independent economic review body, and integrate its functions into Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Competition Authority. Neither BQ nor QBC are regulators. They are independent advisers to government on key reforms and issues that stimulate, drive and grow Queensland's economy.

This bill, with its objective to integrate those organisations into state government departments, risks both the perception and the reality of independence and transparency, which are major pillars of our democracy. Independent policy advice plays a critical role in bringing to governments unbiased views and are key to delivering stronger evidence based decision-making and policy development. Equally, transparency eradicates political barriers and enables the flow of information that protects and reflects the public interest. Vigilance is needed to ensure independence and transparency, as political corruption and maladministration are easily institutionalised when the adviser to government is government itself.


The operational changes to the Titles Registry ensure it remains in public hands, secures the data held about land and, by including it in the Debt Retirement Fund, will improve the state's debt-to-revenue ratio—from what can be ascertained—and this would be positive. Other cost savings, such as the reintegration of the Public Safety Business Agency into the respective Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Police Service, appear to be sensible options moving forward.

The proposed amendments to the Financial Accountability Act 2009 relate to the requirement to publish particular information online. The Queensland Country Press Association felt that, by removing the requirement for statutory advertising and notices to be advertised in printed newspapers, the government is withdrawing the revenue capabilities that keep our printed media alive and diverse, which is vital. Noted are the exemptions that allow information to be published in print, including notices regarding serious risks to public health and safety, product recalls and firearm amnesties, and most importantly retaining publication in regional newspapers that are outside of the Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Ipswich areas.

However, concerns remain, notably that the two major news providers are systemically taking over regional and local publications to the detriment of our local communities through centralised journalism and a move away from investigation, fact checking and reliable local reporting. Equally, the modernisation of information provision, through a move away from print to digital format, needs to ensure that vulnerable and elderly members of our community are not disadvantaged in the process. The effectiveness of the tangible local paper and its credibility for readers should never be underestimated in a world increasingly flooded with online misinformation. To this end, pleasingly there is growth, reinvigoration and reinstatement of a number of community and independent print publications that local people appreciate and support including, in my own community, the *Cooroy Rag* and *Noosa Today*.

Finally, with regard to the submissions that oppose the technical amendments to the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019, it is pleasing that concerns have been listened to regarding the compliant analysis certificate for the supply or use of tattoo ink with the health minister withdrawing this amendment to allow for further consultation with the industry. We look forward to an outcome that considers both the health of Queenslanders and appropriate compliance that meets Australia's high standards.

In closing, I thank the Economics and Governance Committee for their thorough review of the bill, departmental staff for their work and the submitters and attendees to the public hearings. With the cornerstone of our democracy being responsibility and accountability, I ask the government to be wary of interfering with processes that require the lens of transparency. Strong independent review processes are essential for both efficiency and credibility, and I will continue to advocate for an increase, not a decrease, of those. Creating a less than robust system of government by slowly diluting previous reforms is not where we should be going; hence, it is difficult to support this bill.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.03 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This bill amends several acts and it is a comprehensive reform of the business and balance sheet of the Queensland government. The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill is designed to do exactly what the title says. The Palaszczuk government has looked at savings across a number of areas and at debt reduction so we can invest in services that matter to Queenslanders. We do not want to cut frontline workers such as our doctors and nurses or any other first responders, whether they be police, fire and emergency services or ambulance staff.

Throughout our term in government we have restored and continue to invest in frontline services and we will continue to do that in this term. The people of Queensland have trusted that our government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, will always back our frontline workers. At the last election we were elected on that platform. We will deliver 5,800 nurses and midwives, 1,500 doctors, 475 paramedics, 2,025 extra police personnel, 357 extra firefighters, 6,190 new teachers and 1,100 new teacher aides. Those are our priorities, we will deliver them and the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 will help us get there.

However, what has happened with COVID-19 has made things difficult. It has changed the way in which the government works. Like all businesses large and small, you need to review your business operations to ensure you are targeting your funding at the best value for money, whether that is investing in new technology, changing the way you deliver services or having staff on the ground to make sure you meet the needs of your customers. As I have said, all businesses need to look at their operational expenditure. The private sector has been reviewing the way they operate as a result of COVID, and the Queensland government is doing exactly the same by considering a savings and debt management plan.

The debt management plan looks at achieving \$3 billion in savings over four years and this bill aims to lock in those savings. Several reviews across government have looked at work units, their structures and their operational expenditure. Through that process we will look at where savings can be made. In the 2021 state budget it was announced that savings of \$352 million had already been achieved through a range of measures. In addition to identified savings, a significant amount of work has been done to review the operational expenditure in various work units across the Queensland Public Service to ensure that we are really focused on its core responsibilities. This bill allows for the legislative change that is required to implement those recommendations.

I want to make it extremely clear that this is not about sacking staff or cutting frontline services. The LNP sacked 14,000 public servants, which was totally unforgiveable. They cut services by sacking our doctors and nurses, our police, our teachers and other hardworking public servants. What they did was absolutely appalling. In Central Queensland they sacked 475 people. The LNP sacked 197 people, including 40 nurses and midwives, in the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. Nine QBuild staff were sacked as part of the first wave of the 322 statewide QBuild jobs lost. To make it worse, that was announced just before Christmas 2012. Everyone was just a number.

I was a public servant during the Newman years. You lived on tenterhooks. You just kept your head down, waiting for a call that your job was gone. I have good friends who were sacked. They were hardworking people. I have friends who have not recovered as a result of having had their employment terminated. There were even suicides. However, it was not only the Public Service they cut funding to; they also cut funding to many of our community organisations. I could not believe they could cut funding to women's shelters, women's health services, the tenancy advisory service, Anglicare and the list goes on. They have no understanding of the support that is required for vulnerable people in our communities.

Out west—in Barcaldine, Longreach and those places—they just sacked staff, and the ongoing impact on those communities was huge. It had a ripple effect through the whole community. It was absolutely appalling. What really scares me is that Campbell Newman is back working for the LNP. The opposition leader was his apprentice. It would be a case of going back to the bad old days if the LNP ever returned to power—back to cutting, sacking and selling.

This bill also amends the Financial Accountability Act 2009, which contains government advertising requirements to be satisfied online or in publication. People in regional Queensland lost their daily newspapers. This has had a huge impact on our elders. I will correct the opposition: they talk about the fact that we will not be doing any advertising in regional papers. We still will be; it is still there. We understand the importance of that, but we need to look at all mediums of communication. The world is changing around us and we have to be on the front foot.


We are looking at reducing red tape. This is extremely important for our small businesses. They need to find those savings. They need to be honing in on what is required to make their businesses successful. I think that is another really good point of this bill.

This bill delivers on the government's ongoing commitment to economic recovery. We need to be creating jobs and future-proofing Queensland to ensure we have the critical infrastructure that we require. As our population grows—and we keep seeing the migration from down south into Queensland as they know how great a state this is—we need to make sure we have the infrastructure and jobs required for that.

This bill is also about making sure that we deliver frontline services and leveraging economic expertise across the government to better develop policies. We need to ensure that every dollar of taxpayers' money delivers the greatest possible benefit for taxpayers. It is so important. People say that the LNP are the better economic managers. They are not. Let's look at what happened when they were last in power. They may have worried about the south-east corner, but they did not care about regional Queensland or the small regional towns.

**Mr Tantari:** What about the feds? A trillion dollars over.

**Mr O'ROURKE:** That is a whole other story. They keep cutting jobs out of regional Queensland. It is just appalling. They have no understanding of the importance of having diversity of employment to make sure these communities prosper. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (3.12 pm): I rise to speak to the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This bill demonstrates the complete lack of ambition of this government. This bill is 264 pages of shuffling the government deckchairs, of shuffling around various government entities, to save a measly \$3 million. While it arguably contains some small improvements, it presents some serious concerns.

The bill will turn the Titles Registry, currently a publicly owned asset, into a company and move it under the Debt Retirement Fund. A big concern is what moving the Titles Registry out of the Public Service will mean for workers. Together union has said that its members are concerned that their protection from liability will be significantly reduced after this bill is passed. It described—

On a daily basis, Registry employees make decisions that directly impact thousands of real estate transactions, the vast majority valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and some valued in the tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars. Accordingly, protection from personal liability is of the utmost importance to members.

It asks that the government amends the bill to ensure that the protection from liability provisions in the bill are identical to the provisions which currently apply to members under the Public Service Act.

I am very glad to hear that moving the Titles Registry into the Queensland Future Fund will help keep it in public hands, because Queenslanders will not stand for this government doing what their counterparts in Victoria did: privatising their Titles Registry in 2018 for a short-sighted \$2.86 billion.

We have also previously seen Queensland Labor privatise parts of Queensland Rail, the Port of Brisbane and Forestry Plantations Queensland. More recently, we have seen them selling off more than a thousand public homes. I hope that Queensland Labor stick to their word on keeping the Titles Registry in public hands.

The bill moves the productivity and regulatory review functions of the Queensland Productivity Commission into the Treasury. The explanatory notes to this bill say that this integration will enhance Treasury's economic policy capability and enable greater integration of the government's economic strategy. What this actually means in practice is that this removes the independence of the Queensland Productivity Commission, so now the government will oversee the body that writes the reports that scrutinise government decisions. We need more independent scrutiny of government, not less.

I am pleased to see that, after significant advocacy from Queensland tattoo artists and tattoo shops, the government has indicated it will withdraw the amendments related to regulation of tattoo ink that are included in this bill. A range of South Brisbane locals got in touch with my office over the last two weeks, outlining significant negative impacts that these changes would have on their local small businesses, so I wrote to the health minister and the Treasurer urging them to reconsider and to conduct thorough consultation with the industry. I am thankful that the government has taken this on board and has put a pause on these amendments to properly consult with local tattoo businesses and sole traders. These amendments had really good intentions around banning carcinogenic tattoo ink in Queensland, but it is crucial that the government works with the industry to find a way to do this without having such a negative impact on small businesses and sole traders.

To me, the most stark thing about this bill is how incredibly unambitious it is. We have just gone through a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, and the related economic crisis is not over. Our social housing waiting list is at record highs, growing by 7,000 people per year; more than a third of Queensland renters are in housing stress; and insecure employment and underemployment has grown to record levels—and this is the best the government can do?

Do not get me started on the opposition's response. They harped on for weeks and weeks, pretending to be concerned about social housing and how underfunded our public health system is, yet the only critique they now have of this bill is that it does not cut enough. To move amendments that

only change the name of the bill when hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders are struggling is an absolute joke and is the reason people are switching off from politics. This bill and the LNP's response demonstrate the lack of imagination and narrow thinking that is all too common in this place.

During the pandemic the CEO of Glencore, one of Queensland's biggest coal producers, grew his wealth by \$500 million. Harry Triguboff, who has a significant property investment in Queensland, grew his wealth by a whopping \$1.7 billion. Mining corporations still exported \$45 billion worth of Queensland resources over the 2020-21 financial year. Despite a tumultuous year, the Commonwealth Bank was able to pay its CEO the equivalent of an estimated \$8.4 million. Yet here we are spending our time debating these 264 pages that will only save a measly \$3 million.

It is time for both sides of this House to have some bloody ambition, to go after the wealthiest in our state—mining corporations, big banks and property developers—


**Ms PUGH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that language was unparliamentary. I would ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): Member for South Brisbane, do you withdraw?

**Dr MacMAHON:** I withdraw. They could go after the wealthiest in our state—mining corporations, big banks and property developers—and make them pay a little bit more to fund our economic recovery. Introducing a modest bank levy of just 0.05 per cent on the biggest five banks in Queensland would raise around triple what these 264 pages do in one year. The government could follow their Victorian counterparts and introduce a developer tax. A 75 per cent developer tax on increases in land value as a consequence of rezoning would bring in about five times what these 264 pages do in just one year. The staggering figure that could be raised by increasing mining royalties on coal, gas and minerals is in stark contrast to the measly \$3 million that we are arguing over today.

The Greens will support this bill today because it contains some small improvements, but I emphasise that Queensland needs this government to have more ambition than this bill and to have some courage—to stop just tinkering around the edges, to stop spending countless hours and resources shifting around the government deckchairs and instead start going after those in our state with obscene wealth and get them to pay their fair share.

If this government had some courage we could have properly funded essential services and infrastructure, we could have big investment building tens of thousands of new public homes and more funding for more teachers, doctors and nurses. We could create tens of thousands of good steady jobs by setting up a publicly owned renewable manufacturing industry or a mass build of publicly owned renewable energy. These bold ideas are what Queensland needs to drive our economic recovery, not the 260 pages of shuffling the government deckchairs.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (3.20 pm): Courage from a party that will never be in government! I am pleased to rise today to support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2020. We know the coronavirus pandemic has delivered an unprecedented shock to the global economy and Queensland has certainly not been immune to this. However, our state's success in containing the virus has ensured that we are witnessing a strong economic recovery as we continue to focus on the priorities of creating jobs, building essential infrastructure and delivering frontline services. As a government we want to ensure that Public Service agencies are also firmly focused on the core tasks that will deliver on our recovery. This includes cutting back on non-essential activities and reviewing agency activities to make sure that our government is focused on what is important right now.

Last year the Treasurer announced that the government would be implementing a savings and debt plan to deliver savings of \$3 billion over four years to 2023-24. The measures outlined by the Treasurer are aimed at providing significant savings, importantly without the need to cut services, sack public servants or sell Queensland assets. That is the critical difference between Labor and those opposite. If the LNP were confronted with the challenges facing Queensland today, we know that they would head straight to austerity measures—cutting vital frontline services and selling off Queensland's assets.

As has been stated, the bill before us today represents an important reform of the business and balance sheet of the Queensland government. The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill is an important part of delivering on our promise to save Queenslanders every dollar we can whilst delivering important frontline services. The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to investing in those frontline services which matter immensely to my community and constituents in Jordan. Our government makes sensible, prudent savings which do not hurt Queenslanders. The people of Queensland have trusted our government for an historic third term. We were elected to always back the front line and we will deliver on this platform.



Let us talk about the facts. Since our election in 2015 we have created 307,400 jobs. Queensland has had the largest employment growth—up 54,900 or 2.1 per cent—of any state or territory since March 2020. We have also seen 114,700 Queenslanders gain full-time employment since the depth of the pandemic in May 2020—more than any other state. We are delivering our economic and fiscal measures that I am proud to assist with in my role as Assistant Minister for Treasury. We are building back Queensland better for future generations.

We know that when the LNP were in power they did the complete opposite. It has been widely noted that we saw 14,000 public servants lose their jobs. Let us talk about the savage cuts that were made to my community in the Jordan electorate, specifically in the proud areas of Logan and Ipswich which I represent. In Logan we saw 925 hospital and health jobs, including 298 nurse and midwife positions, cut in Metro South Health. In Ipswich we saw 124 hospital and health jobs, including 92 nurse positions, cut in West Moreton. These are growing areas of South-East Queensland, and at a time when more investment should have been made into our health system those opposite chose to cut health jobs and services.

There is no remorse from those opposite—no mea culpa and no acknowledgement that perhaps their policies and actions were too austere; however, the people of Queensland do not forget. The LNP believe enough time has passed and everyone has forgotten what they did. I can tell them that people have not forgotten. Locals in my electorate continue to mention the savage cuts, continue to reference family members who lost their jobs during the Newman government years and services that were cut or wound back.

I do not need people to tell me this—here I am, an example of someone who was sacked from her job in the Newman government. Six months later, my husband, who was a TAFE teacher at that time, was also sacked. I personally know the devastation of those years—the financial insecurity, the callous and cruel way it was handled and the uncertainty within the Public Service as people wondered which of their colleagues would be sacked next. When those opposite say it has been six years and move on, they do so because they know this is still resonating in our communities. Queenslanders do not trust them because they know what they are capable of—how they misled Queenslanders, not only in 2012 but in 2020 with their election commitments like the Bradfield Scheme and the Bruce Highway hoax.

The bill seeks to support the state's contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund under the Queensland Future Fund Act 2020 by providing for the transfer of the Queensland Titles Registry to a newly formed company that will be contributed to a trust within the Debt Retirement Fund structure. The Titles Registry was among the first of the publicly owned assets to be earmarked for contribution to the Debt Retirement Fund, with the proposed transfer to enable the Title Registry's estimated \$4.2 billion value to be recognised on the state's balance sheet for the first time.

In its submission to the Economics and Governance Committee, Treasury explained the proposed transfer and recognition of these assets which would serve to more accurately reflect the government's debt position. As they advised—

... to the extent that we have surplus assets that could be appropriately recognised in the overall calculation of our debt-to-revenue ratio, the surplus being recognised in the Future Fund allows us to, in effect, offset a rating agency's calculation of our debt-to-revenue ratio, so it is utilising those assets in a different way.

The bill effectively gives effect to the transfer by providing for the transmission of Titles Registry assets, liabilities, rights, responsibilities, obligations, operations and employees to the operator—the Queensland Titles Registry Pty Ltd or Registry Co, a newly formed company—that would be contributed to a Queensland Investment Corporation managed trust within the Debt Retirement Fund structure. Those opposite are certainly not happy about this. We know that by putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund it means it is now out of their reach to sell off if they were returned to power. Key stakeholders such as Together union and the Queensland Law Society have commended the government's decision to retain public ownership of the Titles Registry. This is an important aspect of the bill that ensures the Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 will see \$3 million in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. I note that the LNP do not think much about \$3 million in savings, but to me that is the ultimate reflection of those opposite. They do not see the value that this money can have on individuals and communities. This \$3 million means a lot to my community in Jordan—funding a maternal health clinic in Springfield, funding a new clubhouse for

the kids who have started playing Rugby League with the Flagstone Tigers, funding the new bus loop service to Spring Mountain or funding for Gales Community House. This is where \$3 million in funding supports my community.


Importantly, the \$3 million in direct savings is only one part of the Palaszczuk government's broader \$3 billion savings agenda that we put to Queenslanders. These are sensible savings that do not harm Queenslanders, unlike the LNP's ravaging and raging cuts agenda. We know that members on the opposition benches will complain about the deficit even when the Morrison government has the largest deficit ever seen in Australia's history. There is no sign of a surplus from the LNP Morrison government. The LNP love to complain when it comes to debt, even though we have just seen the Morrison government's debt increase to a staggering trillion dollars. What was clearly shown in the last federal budget, even with all that debt, is that Queensland is getting a pittance from the Morrison government. Those opposite have nothing to say about this yet complain about the strong investment we are making in Queensland.

We all know that the Public Safety Business Agency, or PSBA, was set up so the LNP could sell it off. That is why they are so upset with us abolishing the statutory bodies as well. Building Queensland and the Productivity Commission have served Queensland well, and that work can certainly continue inside key agencies which will save significant funds for the government.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill will also see the fee unit model reduce costs for Parliamentary Counsel which each year creates significant workload issues as they work through the annual unit indexation. Queenslanders will all remember how the LNP set up indexation fees and charges at 3.5 per cent regardless of inflation. The Palaszczuk government has brought those fees and charges down—first to 2.25 per cent and now to 1.7 per cent, the lowest indexation rate in more than a decade.

The provisions in the bill not only free up the valuable time of the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel but also ensure that we are not increasing the burden on hardworking Queenslanders—though I can see the time of the Parliamentary Counsel has certainly been wasted with frivolous amendments to the bill's title. No consideration has been given to the fact that this stunt still required work by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and parliamentary staff to copy and distribute. It is just disgraceful.

Through prudent savings measures, responsible borrowing and our relentless focus on creating and supporting jobs, the Palaszczuk government will ensure we can unite and recover to enable Queensland's continued resurgence in a post-COVID world. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (3.30 pm): This bill is many things but it is most emphatically not a debt reduction and savings bill. There is no debt reduction out of this bill and the savings, if there are any, are minuscule and are not able to be detailed. Neither the explanatory notes nor the bill itself in any way detail any debt reduction or give any credible basis for the measly so-called savings of \$3 million. There is not one word of it. In testimony to the committee, the Deputy Under Treasurer could not give one basis for calculation of the savings—not one.

We just heard from the member for Jordan, who I do enjoy listening to and who usually makes a sensible contribution to debate in this House—we have different policies which is fair enough, and that is always good too—as opposed to the member for Maryborough, who not only looks like a clown but sounds like one and behaves like one.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): Pause the clock. That is unparliamentary.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I withdraw. It is as you would expect from someone who spends his time pedalling around on a bicycle selling ice creams. That was his one achievement in life—that and using his assistant ministerial salary to buy those stupid boots, Doc Martens. That is a real saving—get rid of eight assistant ministers at \$84,000. They do not do much. What value does the member for Maryborough add to the productivity and economic growth of Queensland? There are eight of them. The member for Pine Rivers is one. The member for Jordan is another, but I would keep the member for Jordan. I think she does add some value. I am sorry to say it, but I think she does. As for the member for Keppel—no, not too much. There is almost three-quarters of a million dollars—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Clayfield, can we stay on the topic that we are supposed to be discussing here today?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I was discussing potential saving routes, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I will return to the bill. Neither this bill nor this Treasurer nor indeed this government does anything to reduce the total stock of debt that the taxpayers of Queensland are on the hook for. The total stock of debt that

Queensland taxpayers are on the hook for is not reduced in any way, shape or form by the actions that this bill contemplates. In fact, the total stock of debt will continue to grow each and every year until 2023-24 according to the government's own budget papers. It still goes up. That debt is currently expected to be almost \$130 billion by the 2023-24 budget, which will be delivered in just over two years time. We will see just how much that debt is going to be in reality in three weeks time, but no-one will be surprised if it is even higher than currently projected.

This bill does not create an offset account as Labor tries to claim. It is in no way like a mortgage offset that a home owner would use when borrowing. First, and most importantly, home owners want to pay down their debt and end up with the clear title of their home. This government does not want to pay down any debt. As the budget papers show, Treasurer Dick wants to increase debt every year for the next four years, not pay it down.

Secondly, an offset account reduces the interest payable on a mortgage, offsetting the amount of savings that are deposited in an account against the principal of the loan. This bill does not do that and neither does the so-called Queensland Debt Retirement Fund. Not one cent less interest will be charged on Queensland's borrowings by lenders because of this bill because those interest rates are already fixed. They are fixed in the 10-year bond market. They are being paid now and they will be paid each and every year for the duration of those bonds.

This bill is purely and simply an accounting sleight of hand to avoid an otherwise inevitable ratings downgrade that I mentioned last year in the debate on the two appropriation bills. As the key fiscal indicators blow out under this Treasurer and this Labor government, debt-to-revenue ratios are reaching levels not seen in decades. They are currently budgeted in Labor's own budget papers to peak at 134 per cent in the general government sector and an eye-watering 172 per cent for the non-financial public sector. The Labor government is desperately resorting to accounting trickery to avoid a downgrade. It is the sort of thing that reminds me of the Lehman Brothers debacle that led to that bank collapsing under a mountain of debt that it tried to wrap and sell as some secure positive asset.

Its foundation is dubious—a valuation of \$4.1 billion on no evidence. We have a Deputy Under Treasurer's testimony to the committee that is wishy-washy at best and avoids answering direct questions. This is because the government wants to pump up the tyres on this transaction. It is because it is effectively trying to monetise a service—the registration services of the titles office. The realistic valuation needs to look at the income of the titles office and more importantly the profit, because it is only if it makes a profit that it will generate sufficient funds to both support its value and make any payments at all.

If it is turning a profit and that profit supports a valuation of \$4.1 billion, what is going to replace that money in the Department of Resources? Where is the money coming from to fill the hole? It can only come from one place—and that is from taxpayers. If it is going from the Department of Resources to this company, what is going to plug the hole?

Every year I have been in this place Labor governments have increased debt with no credible plan to reduce that debt, even as they sign up Queensland for more debt. In the best of times in 2007 debt increased—more than doubling from the previous year. Just this year alone, by 25 May the Queensland Treasury Corporation had gone to market and borrowed another \$21 billion. There is much that I can say about Labor's mismanagement of debt, but the figures in fact speak for themselves. I do want to save something to say for the budget when it is brought down in three weeks.

I want to address something in relation to Building Queensland. I am interested to see that the Treasurer is getting rid of Building Queensland and the Queensland Productivity Commission. In a victory for the Treasurer's faction against the Left, we see the dismantling of Building Queensland—the final victory of Treasurer Cameron Dick over former treasurer Jackie Trad. Not content with her absence from this place, the member for Woodridge is now dismantling one of Labor's key election promises from 2015. You have to wonder how long this plan has been hatching in the backblocks of his mind. It certainly formed no part of any election commitment. I wonder why this little announcement was left until March this year.

Of course he has been on the warpath against former treasurer Trad's Building Queensland since 2018, when he started reducing its transparency, increasing the time frame for the pipeline reports and increasing the threshold for oversight from \$50 million to \$100 million and to \$500 million for road projects. What did former minister Trad say in 2015? She said—

... Building Queensland will mean we can prioritise investments based on a rigorous and transparent decision-making process, not on a political whim. This is an important part of what our government stands for. Queenslanders can now have confidence in infrastructure decision making ...


What is the Labor government now doing? It is shutting it all down.

As the member for Algester said in 2017, demand for Building Queensland's service is expanding. Perhaps there is too much independence in Building Queensland, or maybe it is as simple as a 'get square' from one faction of the Labor Party to the other.

What about the poor old Queensland Productivity Commission? Why does Treasurer Dick hold such a grudge against his two predecessors from his own side? It was set up by Treasurer Pitt in 2015 to independently assess and provide advice, but this Treasurer does not need it. He is like Napoleon leading us over the Steppes into Russia. 'We're on our way! I don't need any advice. I'll get rid of the Queensland Productivity Commission!' They were not too happy with the advice from the manufacturing inquiry. In fact, I went on the website to look at the government response to the QPC's first report on manufacturing but the page could not be found. It was deleted from the department's website at 2.20 this afternoon. I table that document.

*Tabled paper:* Web page for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, titled 'Page Not Found' [\[719\]](#).

It recommended not giving out incentives anymore. That would mean no more photo ops with movie stars for Premier Palaszczuk, and we know how she does not like that. This bill is a farce, a fraud and a fake from a government marred in economic failure. It should not be supported. It should not be sold. It is a con on the people of Queensland. They will see through it.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (3.40 pm): I rise to speak on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. Every dollar counts. It is a simple phrase but it means something to Queenslanders. It means a lot to our Treasurer, our Premier, to the Palaszczuk Labor government, and it means a lot to me. It is a lesson that the Treasurer learned when he started his first job in 1982, and it is a lesson that I too learned when I started my first job in the year 2000 as a 15-year-old working at McDonald's in Rockhampton. I have now been working for almost 20 years, and for almost all of those 20 years I have been a proud member of my union. My first pay packet from McDonald's went towards saving for my first car, which after several years of working I was able to afford: a two-door second-hand Holden Barina that I bought from a woman in Gladstone who had won it at the Yaralla Sports Club, my lucky 'Betty Barina'.

I agree with the Treasurer: those dollars that I worked hard for mattered, hard work matters, prudence matters and savings matter. That is the lesson that lies at the heart of this bill. This bill is a comprehensive reform of the business and balance sheet of the Queensland government. It is designed to reduce the burden of debt and deliver savings. We are saving taxpayer dollars, restructuring our balance sheet by finding savings and reducing the burden of debt. We are doing that so we can invest to deliver services for all Queenslanders right across this state.

Unlike those opposite, we do not pursue savings and debt reduction as an end in itself. We do not cut doctors, nurses and midwives, we do not cut teachers and we do not cut police. The last time the LNP was in government it cut 14,000 public servants—4,000 health workers, of which 1,800 were midwives. In 2013, eight of the current LNP front bench—which equates to 44 per cent of the LNP's entire shadow ministry, almost half of the current shadow ministry—served in the Newman government as ministers, including the former member for Mundingburra, the current member for Broadwater, who was Campbell Newman's minister for local government.

But I digress. In 2013 my colleagues, who were all urban and regional planners, architects, project managers and surveyors who were working to deliver more social housing and community infrastructure in the department of public works, told me about a complete stranger to whom they gave the name 'Box Man'. They did not know 'Box Man'. They had never seen him before, but 'Box Man' would walk into their office on 80 George Street carrying cardboard boxes, tap random people on the shoulder and tell them to pack their stuff and get out. Hardworking professionals who had dedicated years of their working lives to delivering infrastructure and housing for Queensland were simply tapped on the shoulder, handed a box and told to leave. It was devastating for so many. The same sackings happened right across the state, including 1,400 nurses, midwives, healthcare professionals and teachers. Gladstone port workers, QBuild apprentices and tradies in Central Queensland lost their jobs because of the failed fiscal management of the Newman government.

When I was elected in 2015 my community in Keppel was hurting, as was the rest of Queensland, because of the LNP's cuts to workers. In contrast to the LNP's economic wasteland, Labor makes sensible, viable savings that benefit Queenslanders. Labor's prudent savings, identified in this bill, were uncovered on our own initiative to examine public costings and are expected to make sure our frontline services—the very ones the LNP slashed and we had to rehire—are sustainable and focused on the needs of the public. Labor invests those funds for the good of every Queenslanders. It is an idea that the


LNP hates because when they talk about savings what they really mean is cuts. We know that the LNP hates the idea of Queensland taxpayers soon getting the full value of the Titles Registry on our balance sheet. This strikes a blow at the LNP economic structure because it means they cannot sell off the Titles Registry. Make no mistake: the LNP is always keen to sell public assets. People in my community of Keppel, and indeed across Queensland, do not support the privatisation of the state's strategic assets.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms LAUGA:** I take that interjection, because it is actually the reason I stand in this place. The reason I joined the Labor Party was to stop the privatisation of assets, as do all members on this side of the chamber. When the LNP was last in government they sold Queensland Motorways, they tried to sell our electricity assets and ports, and they wasted \$70 million of taxpayers' money on consultants to try and do that. This is exactly why I joined the Labor Party: not because I love the Labor Party, but because I wanted to change it. That is why I am standing in this place as part of a government that is proud to stand on our track record of backing our public servants, supporting frontline workers and, most importantly, stopping the sale of assets that 44 per cent of those on the LNP front bench wanted to sell off. That is why most of us on this side of the House are here.

Labor has promised Queenslanders that we will always keep our assets, and that includes the value of the Titles Registry as an asset that can be an offset against debt, thereby reducing our net debt. The LNP complains about deficits in Queensland, which has a booming economy, even though the Morrison government has a trillion dollar deficit 10 years into the future and beyond with no sign of a surplus. I am sure those 'Back in the Black' mugs Josh Frydenberg had made up a few years ago are in the trash. The LNP also complains about debt even though the New South Wales Liberal government has higher debt than Queensland, including when measured on a proposal basis.

Mr Deputy Speaker, 20 years ago I learned an important lesson. Every dollar counts, and that lesson is just as important today as it was 20 years ago. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.46 pm): I rise to contribute to the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill and endorse the member for Kawana's amendment to bring about some honesty in the title of this bill because I can assure you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the title of the bill we are debating today is misleading. From the outset it must be said that the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill is another illustration of the financial incompetence of this government. I will be opposing this bill for a number of reasons, but let's start with Labor's track record. What a woeful track record it is! Quite simply, this is a government that delivers debt in multiples.

After the COVID-19 pandemic started, as part of their re-election campaign Labor promised there would be borrowings of \$4 billion. What did we end up with? A 600 per cent increase to a whopping \$28 billion. Then we had the Treasurer's promise to rein in spending, delivering \$3 billion in savings over four years. How much of the target has been achieved? You would think that after six months of a four-year period you could expect to see some savings or to have at least identified areas where a proportion of that money could be found. No, we have a commitment to 0.1 per cent of the target—not one per cent, but a tenth of that—yet this Treasurer and this government, whose financial failings are of a huge magnitude, expect us to believe that this bill will reduce debt and increase savings.

Many Queenslanders would be familiar with the global financial crisis, an economic disaster caused largely by overinflated asset values. It is very obvious, however, that this government and this Treasurer have no problem with asset values because they simply make them up. Firstly, we had \$3 billion in Queenslanders' superannuation savings diverted to help establish the Queensland Future Fund. When that plan was proven to be a failure this government's response was to reallocate an asset. Most people would think that if you want to reallocate an asset you would have it valued. Not this Labor government! We have seen no explanation for the valuation this government expects us to believe. Instead, we have a value that is almost 44 per cent higher than the value of the Victorian equivalent and a staggering 57 per cent higher than the New South Wales counterpart.

What is the pay-off for this sleight of hand? Does it reduce debt? No. It offsets debt. Does it improve Queensland's credit rating and therefore reduce our interest bill? No. The \$3 billion interest bill reduces very little, if at all.

In economics there is what is often referred to as good debt and bad debt. Good debt helps you build your asset base. It funds expansion and growth. In government parlance, it would be funding for new roads, schools, hospitals and police stations. It would create jobs. It would put us on a trajectory for future growth.

In Queensland, however, most of our debt is bad debt. Why? It is because two-thirds of our new debt is being spent to cover the basics. In household terms, it would be like borrowing to pay the grocery bill—not short-term borrowing until payday, but long-term borrowing like a mortgage that inevitably our children and grandchildren will be forced to pay. What we have so far then is a bill that does not do what it is purported to do—a bill that is moved by a government that breaks promises and is intent on burdening future generations of Queenslanders just to keep the lights on, but it gets worse.

This is a bill that reduces transparency and entrenches more power in the hands of ministers. Let us take, for example, the changes to the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016. This is an important act for many Queenslanders who, sadly, are left injured due to road accidents—injuries like spinal cord injuries, brain injuries and amputations to name a few. This act when introduced by the Palaszczuk government established a board to ultimately oversee the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland. That board's task, among others, was to set investment objectives, to establish investment strategies, to ensure the agency performs its functions and to provide oversight.

The bill currently before the House abolishes that board and vests all powers of the board with the chief executive officer who, if we are really honest, is nominated by the Treasurer and appointed by the Governor in Council and that person can be a Public Service officer. What we see here is the potential for the Treasurer to nominate someone from within his department to control the investment strategies of an agency that people who face a lifetime of dealing with horrific injuries need to rely on—the same Treasurer who increases debt by 600 per cent and cannot achieve even one per cent of the promised savings.

I mentioned oversight before and, unfortunately, this bill takes a slash-and-burn approach to both oversight and transparency. Nowhere is this more evident than in this government's demolition of both the Queensland Productivity Commission and Building Queensland. One could be forgiven for thinking that, when it comes to the Queensland Productivity Commission, their demolition is due to their honesty. Many times now we have seen the QPC reveal failings in this government's actions and policies.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, I do not know who is doing the speech—you or the member for Burdekin. If you want to have a conversation, can you take it outside. There was some information given this morning that all members of the House need to remain in their own seats due to the COVID-safe plan. I was going to wait until the end of this speech but you got louder and louder.

**Mr LAST:** Many times now we have seen the QPC reveal failings in this government's actions and policies. In regional Queensland those failings include what is effectively an electricity tax that the Palaszczuk government continues to tear from the pockets of families. Instead of a strong, independent voice under this bill, the QPC will be reduced to a whisper in the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction at best. Regional Queenslanders already know that this government has ignored and will continue to ignore even the strongest regional voices, so what hope do we have of them listening to a whisper?

A perfect example of that ignorance is the Resources Community Infrastructure Fund. Despite the assurances of the former treasurer, the current Treasurer will not even advise if the advisory committee has met. Maybe in fact the Resources Community Infrastructure Fund is now actually being used to prop up the budget—just like the superannuation savings of Public Service employees. Couldn't we use the funds contained within the Resources Community Infrastructure Fund in regional and rural Queensland at the moment? Wouldn't they be welcomed by all of those councils which are out there doing it tough at the moment, trying to balance their budgets and deliver infrastructure and services to their respective communities?

There is another slap in the face for regional Queenslanders as well. At a time when physical newspaper deliveries are becoming more and more rare, the Queensland government is tearing out a vital revenue source for independent newspapers that largely have been established to fill the void.

I will be opposing this bill because it is bad legislation when it comes to transparency and oversight. It is bad legislation when it comes to standing up for rural and regional Queensland. As my colleagues have highlighted, it is bad for many other areas and industries. I will continue to stand up for Queenslanders no matter where they live and I urge other members to do the same by opposing this bill.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.55 pm): I rise today to contribute to this debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. During my contribution, I will refer to some memory lapses from those opposite. I really like to listen to the member for Clayfield. He has been here a long time and he is interesting to listen to but he said something during his contribution about eight assistant ministers being a large number. I could be wrong but I believe the LNP government had 14 assistant ministers.

As we have heard already, the objectives of this bill are: to support Queensland's contribution to our Debt Retirement Fund; to introduce a fee unit model for annual indexing of government regulatory fees, making the process simpler and more transparent; to integrate the staff, assets, records, resources and liabilities of Building Queensland into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to pivot the focus of work from identifying and leading business cases for government agencies to assisting them in the progression of infrastructure policies; and to reintegrate the Public Service Business Agency into public safety entities. I know there are some constituents in Kurwongbah who will particularly welcome that transition.

The bill will also: integrate the activities of the Queensland Productivity Commission into Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Competition Authority; change the governance structure of the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland—a no-fault scheme providing lifetime treatment, care and support to those who sustain eligible serious personal injuries in a motor vehicle accident in Queensland; and to make it easier for governments to meet their legislated print and advertising requirements, with recognition of society's growing preference for online mediums. In summary, this bill introduces changes to existing machinery of government arrangements that will increase efficiency to help pay down debt and save money because, unlike the federal LNP government—a government about to hit a trillion dollars in debt—Queensland is committed to paying down our debt in a fast and responsible way. We will do it without introducing new taxes and, more importantly, without cutting frontline services—two areas we know the LNP has form in.

We hear much in this place about asset sales from all sides. Those opposite constantly bleat about Labor's asset sales. Members opposite have said many times in this place that when they were in government they never sold assets. This is untrue. I am no fan of asset sales; it is well known I am no fan of asset sales from any government. I just want to put on the record again that the LNP Newman government did sell assets. We all know they did. They can say they did not until they are blue in the face, but facts are facts and the proof is right here. I table a document which highlights some of the \$10 billion of assets let go during the Newman years.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Australian Financial Review* online, dated 14 October 2014, titled 'Despite assurances, Queensland on asset selloff binge' [720].

This article from the *Financial Review* by Mark Ludlow itemises the \$10.7 billion that the Newman government let go. It starts with the line—

The Queensland government—

meaning the Newman LNP government—

has sold more than \$10 billion of assets since elected in 2012, despite claiming it would wait for a privatisation mandate at next year's election.

Some of the highlights of the larger sales are: \$824 million of property, including the executive buildings; \$7.1 billion from the sale of Queensland Motorways, which was privatised from QIC, sold to a private company from QIC; \$3.8 billion sell-down in rail operator Aurizon; and the stake in the South Australian electricity supplier ElectraNet to a Chinese company for \$500 million, and I remember being at Powerlink when we heard about that.

They even tried to sell the Kallangur State School oval but thankfully we stopped that. They then planned to sell off another \$30 billion if they won the 2015 election, and they spent upwards of \$70 million trying to tell us it was the right thing to do under their failed Strong Choices plan. Thank goodness they did not win. Now with Campbell Newman back in the leadership team of the party, the sky is the limit for them. Sit down, buckle up, put your helmet on and wait for the sale announcements.

We have heard much about how the cuts of the LNP were so brutal to Queenslanders. One that has slipped under the radar that I would like to highlight—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): Pause the clock. Minister and the member for Gregory, through the chair or you can take it outside. I am trying to hear the speech.

**Mr KING:** Oh I would like to see that!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:**—and talk civilly.

**Mr KING:** We have heard much about how the cuts of the LNP were so brutal. One that slipped under the radar that I would like to highlight was the cuts to the electricity network I worked in. We had a redundancy built into our network called N-1. Members would remember the rhetoric from those opposite about gold plating the network. This gold plating was N-1, or redundancy—or, to simplify it for

those who are unaware, network security. Thank goodness the majority of the major electrical infrastructure that we rely on in this state was built under N-1 or outages like yesterday's generator fire and system trip could take days to restore. The quick restoration of our power grid was due to our publicly owned network and loyal workforce in the industry. If the LNP had gotten away with selling our electricity network we would literally still be in the dark.

We also know that the LNP's record when it comes to cutting frontline services bites hardest in some of our most vulnerable communities like in the federal electorate of Longman, which includes some of the suburbs I represent in this place. That is why I was so pleased to hear the announcement by the federal opposition leader, Anthony Albanese, a week ago that Caboolture local Rebecca Fanning will be Labor's candidate for Longman at the next election. She has credentials, and this is where this ties in because she worked for former Labor treasurer Wayne Swan.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As interesting as it is to hear about Labor's candidate for that area, it has nothing to do with the bill. I ask you to bring the member back to the bill.

**Mr KING:** Thanks, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will return to the bill.


We all love Queensland. As a state, we have led our way through our recovery efforts in the face of the continuing COVID-19 global pandemic—and Rebecca Fanning loves Queensland, too, by the way—thanks to the remarkable personal efforts of all Queenslanders and thanks to the decisions made by our government. While other countries are shutting down, in Queensland we are gearing back up. We have managed to keep our credit rating strong while investing in infrastructure projects right across our state—projects that are creating jobs and projects that will leave a positive legacy for future generations. I have gone through many times the projects in Kurwongbah that we are delivering.

There is the Dakabin station accessibility upgrade, which is on track to be finished this year thanks to savings we have made. There is also the Petrie intersection upgrade. Works there are in full swing, so the long-time traffic bottleneck that is the roundabout will soon be a thing of the past. There is the Bruce Highway upgrade at Deception Bay Road and New Settlement Road, a project that our state government fought hard to deliver after the LNP government scrapped/pushed back—they took it out of QTRIP—its funding under Campbell Newman. There are also local sporting facilities upgrades including: new change rooms recently opened at the home of the mighty Pine Rivers Bears, Mathieson Park in Petrie; Works for Queensland upgrade at Narangba Rangers footy ground; tennis centre at Harris Avenue in Narangba, \$2 million; new lighting for the Burpengary Jets' home ground; and tens of thousands of dollars in grants to help small businesses adapt their operations in the face of COVID-19, with another three new grants programs just announced this month. In addition, our government is delivering the \$400 million redevelopment of Caboolture Hospital, investing more to catch up on elective surgeries paused by COVID-19, and providing exciting new tourism initiatives to help the sector get back on its feet in our area.

These are the services that Queenslanders want. These are the services we need as we continue investing in the recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. Like any household or business must do when they encounter a change in financial circumstances, we have reviewed the state's balance sheet and made savings where we can. We have a target to achieve \$3 billion in savings over the next four years. This bill will put some of those savings—around \$3 million in direct savings per year—into place. I echo the words of the Treasurer when he introduced this bill: every dollar matters, and it does.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government who puts our people first. We have taken tough decisions to keep Queenslanders safe. Thanks to our fantastic recovery, domestic activity and employment numbers have rebounded across Queensland. This is good news for our government and good news for Queenslanders.

We will continue to find savings to deliver on our commitments to Queenslanders. The savings in these machinery-of-government changes are an important part of our plan to get on with the task of creating jobs, investing in infrastructure and delivering frontline services without cutting, sacking and selling. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.04 pm): I rise to address the somewhat deceptively named Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This is a bill that achieves neither of the outcomes it purports to achieve were one to only read the title of the bill. This is a bill that demonstrates that this state Labor government has a failure to plan and a failure to tackle the difficult issues with anything other than political spin. We need look no further for evidence of this than in the fact that despite the Treasurer crowing that this bill will find \$3 billion in savings, to date the government has only found \$3 million in savings. To meet the Treasurer's unsupported claim of \$3 billion in savings, he is going to have to find



another thousand times more savings than he has so far. Noting that the member for Woodridge has been the Treasurer for a little more than a year, we can expect this Labor government to deliver on its promise of \$3 billion in savings from this bill by the next millennium, in 3020.

Given the woeful track record of the current Treasurer and that of his predecessor, Jackie Trad, I am sure the Treasurer will forgive Queenslanders for being less than confident in his ability to deliver anything close to the \$3 billion in savings. How can the Treasurer expect Queenslanders to trust him when he went to the election on the basis of increasing state debt by \$4 billion and promptly broke that promise by increasing state debt by \$28 billion? If we consider the savings identified as a part of this bill in light of that increased debt burden, the \$3 billion in savings constitutes just 0.0001 per cent of the increase in state government debt over the last year. The \$3 billion in savings identified as a part of this bill will equate to approximately 57 cents per Queensland while the increase in state debt in the last 12 months equates to around \$5,354 per Queensland. It is clear that this bill is a con job. This bill is an exercise in political spin, not a genuine attempt to stabilise government spending and reduce debt. Queenslanders deserve better.

The Treasurer could not even convince a single business representative group to make a submission on this bill. It is a clear sign that businesses and lobby groups consider that this bill achieves little and was not even worth wasting their effort on.

This state Labor government is so bereft of ideas and substance that they cannot even speak about the merits of their own bill. We have seen a conga line of Labor MPs come in here and wax lyrical about anything other than a plan to deal with debt. If we use the Minister for Employment and Small Business as an example, in her insipid contribution to this debate, the minister spent six minutes and 10 seconds ranting about the LNP and only three minutes and 40 seconds speaking about a bill championed by her government in which she is a minister. It was almost as if the minister was preparing for a life in opposition. After presiding over failure after failure in child safety and hiding when the hard questions were asked, the member for Bulimba has shown time and again that she is ill equipped for her ministerial responsibility, just as this government is ill equipped to get the state budget under control.

I turn now to the provisions in the bill which continue this Labor government's long march to reduce transparency and oversight. This bill is an attempt to silence those with inconvenient voices. I speak of bodies such as the Productivity Commission, which was established by the member for Mulgrave in his capacity as the then treasurer. It is a body that was established to provide a strong, independent voice to tackle the difficult issues and to provide economic oversight and advice. This bill seeks to remove that independent voice and fold the functions of the Productivity Commission into Treasury through the establishment of the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. Just like this bill, it will be an office with a great name and no substance.

We know that the Queensland Productivity Commission operates on the principles of independence, rigour, responsiveness, transparency, equity, efficiency and effectiveness—hardly the hallmarks of this Palaszczuk Labor government. The strength of the Queensland Productivity Commission comes from the fact that it is independent and is able to tackle controversial or difficult issues that are in the public interest to address. Unfortunately, that same approach is the reason the axe will now fall on the Queensland Productivity Commission, because this government has a glass jaw and neither the desire nor the capacity to address the critical issues affecting productivity in Queensland.

Leading economist and former chair of the federal Productivity Commission, Gary Banks, in a 2018 address stated—

... various political pressures have ... elicited a defensive posture in ministers' offices, the enlarged ranks of which now see political advisers and issues managers swamping policy people. With this has come a greater inclination to make policy 'on the run'—whether in response to the minor crisis of the day or to clinch a deal with interest groups ...

With the Premier's legion of media advisers and political spin doctors, it sounds pretty familiar. Mr Banks went on to state—

... independent reviews have found the public service struggling to keep up in this hyper-charged political world, and progressively losing the capability (and possibly the motivation) to provide the evidence-based policy advice on which good political decision-making depends.

The Productivity Commission was tasked with analysing and developing sound policy solutions, not necessarily policy solutions that are good politics. Is it any wonder, then, that the Queensland Productivity Commission has popped up in the sights of a Labor state government that is light on the details, heavy on the politics and only interested in maintaining power at the expense of everyday

Queenslanders? Dismantling the independent Queensland Productivity Commission is nothing more than a government intent on shooting the messenger because it does not like the message. Queenslanders deserve better.

I turn now to Queensland Titles Registry, which is being renamed Registry Co, being assigned an unsupportable valuation of \$4.1 billion. That asset is then being transferred into Jackie Trad's baby in the form of the Queensland Future Fund. Because of Labor's flawed methodology, the Future Fund must now be restructured and propped up. Registry Co is being brought in and onto the books to be used to offset debt so the government can improve debt-to-revenue ratios and satisfy the credit rating agencies.


Debt will not be repaid as a consequence of this bill. This is simply a con job that shifts assets from one part of the government to another. How the state government arrived at a valuation of more than \$4 billion for Registry Co remains a mystery. Treasury officials could not provide any detail on the methodology used to arrive at such an inflated figure. As I highlighted in my contribution to the Future Fund Bill in September last year, the New South Wales Land Titles Registry was divested for \$2.6 billion and at the time generated a cash flow of around \$130 million.

I also asked in September why anybody would want to buy an asset with a considerably smaller revenue stream for \$4 billion. In his reply to that debate the Treasurer tried to suggest that the Queensland titles office generates \$304.554 million in cash flow. While I was tempted to take that on face value—that raises its own questions as to why Queensland is charging more than two times more than the much larger state of New South Wales—I thought I would check his number. It turns out that the Treasurer of Queensland simply ignored the expenses that the titles office incurs in generating fees and charges of \$304 million. Presumably the Treasurer's modelling assumes the titles office has no expenses at all: no wages, no IT expenses, no day-to-day running costs—zero, zip, zilch. This is classic 'Labornomics'. It is a con job. The Treasurer knows that Registry Co is not worth \$4.1 billion and that is why he will not provide the details.

We all know that the Treasurer is auditioning for the top job. He is in a race with the Deputy Premier. If he wants to show that he has what it takes, he should come in here and front up with how he has arrived at a valuation of \$4.1 billion for Registry Co, which is fundamental to the justification for this bill.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** They do not like it, but it is true. This bill achieves very little. It is a con job again—an exercise in politics and in spin. Government members could not even bring themselves to speak about the substance of this wafer-thin bill with its misleading title. Queenslanders deserve better than this bill that will not do anything to make their lives better. That is why I am pleased that the LNP will be opposing the bill, and I call on all members of the House to do the same.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (4.14 pm): It is always a delight to follow Steve Dickson's understudy. What a wonderful performance! Even his own side were laughing at him! It was a pleasure to behold. I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. When I was elected in 2015, I committed to my community that I would work hard to represent and protect them and the needs of our community. That is why I support this bill. It is all about protecting Queensland from the LNP agenda to cut, sack and sell. We are about creating jobs.

When I was elected, my community was really hurting because of the terrible LNP cuts. My community told me that they wanted to see good, sustainable frontline jobs that are focused, relevant and meet the needs and expectations of the community. Labor makes sensible, prudent savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure that our frontline services will meet those expectations of my community.

The LNP hate this idea. When the LNP talk savings, what they mean is cuts. We in the bayside know all about that. When the LNP say that these savings are not enough, what they really are saying is that they want to see hard cuts or, like the good member for Chatsworth calls it—and I use the word 'good' ironically—tough love. Yes, that is their attitude.

In government they cut the infrastructure spend to record lows. They cut 14,000 public servants, including 4,000 health workers and 1,800 midwives, all with no regard for the impact these cuts would have on my community. A bunch of privileged LNP members, some of whom still sit in this chamber, just decided, 'Yep, this will go. Yeah, let's get rid of that service. Let's cut this. Let's sell that.' They did not discriminate and it affected the young, the elderly, the unemployed, the disadvantaged and the bereaved. Let's not forget the impact on local business and industry. No-one was safe. That is how they

managed the economy. If the service supported the people who did not vote for them, they got rid of it. They punished people they knew were not their voters. That is how they rolled: they punished people for not voting for them.

Under the LNP government, baysiders not only suffered; we were punished. We lost so many frontline workers that are so important to any community, because the LNP cut them. That is what the member for Chatsworth would call tough love. A child safety office—closed; department of housing—closed; Bayside tenancy advice service—closed; Caravan and Manufactured Home Residents Association—closed. I was an advocacy and advice worker at CAMRA working with some of the most vulnerable members of our community, living in caravan parks and manufactured homes. These residents were just abandoned by the LNP. It is shameful.

Wynnum Hospital was reduced to a healthcare centre, with a huge reduction in health services such as mental health—no surprise there as we know they are really good at that in terms of the Barrett centre—social work, podiatry and physiotherapy, to name just a few. All of those services were ripped out of my community and there was a huge reduction in palliative care services.

Let us not forget the axing of the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. This successful program returned \$8 for every \$1 spent. Perhaps the most hurtful was the closure of the beloved Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit. Yes, that was shut down, too. This was a functional, accredited residential care facility. The door slammed shut. Eighty-five residents had to find new homes. Relocating often cost those vulnerable people their lives. The trauma and dismay experienced by these residents and their families is beyond words. You guessed it: it was another cut by the LNP government, a policy orchestrated by those on the other side of this chamber.

I know that I have spoken many times in this House about these cuts, but I will continue to remind Queenslanders of the actions of the previous LNP government. Each time I speak about these cuts I hear from the other side, 'Oh, get over it. That was years ago.' The families of the residents of Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit have not forgotten—nor will I—and I will not let those opposite forget their shameful actions.

Sadly, these attacks were on the most marginalised in my community—the elderly, families, young people, the unemployed and renters—and the architects and perpetrators of these cuts still sit in this House today. The previous LNP government picked on what it thought were easy targets. However, we baysiders are not easy targets and we will not stand for the disgraceful axing of our local services and the total lack of regard for our community.

The great news for baysiders is that the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering for the bayside and Queensland. Our government is committed to creating jobs, building important infrastructure and growing the economy, and returning important local frontline services and jobs—and that is what this bill is all about, unlike the mantra of those opposite of cut, sack, sell. The loss of the services, the staff and the consumers of these services and the unemployed public servants were a huge blow to our local businesses. With fewer workers in the CBD and less money in the pockets of people for spending, our traders suffered. It was disgraceful.

Thank goodness that the Palaszczuk Labor government sees the value in infrastructure and investing in our future. With the realisation of Gundu Pa, our new community health centre, it provides outstanding public health services. In fact, it provides many clinics and we have seen a 43.1 per cent increase in funding for the Metro South HHS since the bad old days of the LNP. During Palliative Care Week it is important to acknowledge the amazing work of our palliative care team. This again is another delivery by Queensland Health, so I thank the palliative care workers for the outstanding work they do. Those opposite sacked people, closed the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit and cut services where they were needed most. Some 935 health workers were sacked from the Metro South HHS alone. That is the clear difference between those opposite and the Palaszczuk government. We build services; the LNP cuts them. The Palaszczuk government is all about employing Queenslanders and creating jobs and opportunities, but the LNP wants to cut them. Unlike the LNP, the Palaszczuk government makes sensible savings that do not cut frontline services and do not hurt Queenslanders.


It is no wonder the LNP wants to complain about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund because it means that it cannot get its grubby little hands on the Titles Registry and sell it off. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership and those opposite will not be able to sell it, and they really hate this idea. The LNP hates the idea that Queensland taxpayers will get the full value of the Titles Registry on our balance sheet. By getting that asset on our balance sheet, offsetting debt, it completely

removes the LNP's fake arguments for privatisation. The LNP will not be able to write a dodgy report or a commission of inquiry that recommends it be sold and it will not be able to waste money on privatisation consultant fees for its LNP mates. Let us not forget the Costello report.

People in my community do not support privatisation of the state's strategic assets, and that is why I was elected. Privatisation is in the LNP's DNA. We know it is true because when it was in government it sold—for example, just in my electorate—the Hemmant State School oval. It also tried to sell off our electricity assets and it wasted \$70 million of taxpayers' money on consultants to do so. Under Labor we will always keep our assets because we listened to what our communities had to say.

The bill provides \$3 million in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. \$3 million might not seem a lot to those privileged people in the LNP, but let me tell the House what it means to my community. It could mean the difference between a student at Brisbane Bayside State College attending the new STEM facility that has just been built. It could mean the Wynnum State School's new playground facility. It could mean the Fringe Festival which saw 22 sold out shows and nearly 10,000 visitors to Wynnum last year, or the \$3.5 million Wynnum Ambulance Station. That is just a small example of what \$3 million could fund in my electorate.

Under the LNP government we saw disgraceful, shameful acts and I know that Queenslanders do not want that to ever happen again. In contrast, the Palaszczuk Labor government has adopted the position that we will support and protect our assets and protect workers and frontline services. That is what is different about this side of the House. We have a fair and measured approach to savings. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (4.23 pm): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. In supporting our state through the impacts of COVID-19, the Queensland government absorbed considerable debt. We did that because it was the right thing to do and many Queenslanders also know that it is the right thing to do. We did it because protecting the lives and the livelihoods of Queenslanders was worth the cost of the state's bottom line. As our state moves towards economic recovery, those debts must be serviced and every part of the Queensland government, including my Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, has a role to play in finding savings and reducing that debt. That is why this bill and the provisions it contains for my department are so important. However, we do not have to achieve those savings by cutting services or doing less for Queenslanders.

I have seen firsthand what those opposite are capable of doing. During the 2017 election campaign the LNP decided at the time that it would be a great idea to hire a gentleman to work for the Gladstone Ports Corporation by the name of Michael Duggan. Michael Duggan then went on to be the LNP's candidate for the seat of Gladstone during that election. During that time he was employed at the Gladstone Ports Corporation in order to prepare the Gladstone port ready to be sold off, or, as the LNP said, leased for 99 or 100 years. These are the types of provisions that we want to ensure do not happen again, particularly in my electorate.

Not only did we see Michael Duggan run as the candidate for the LNP in Gladstone but also he continued to run a campaign supporting asset sales, particularly ports in Queensland. At the time it was hypocritical that he was employed by the Gladstone Ports Corporation in his role but was also running as the LNP candidate for the seat of Gladstone working towards selling the Gladstone port. And those opposite wonder why they lost the election and suffered a distant loss in the seat of Gladstone, but these were exactly the sorts of things happening in the background of the LNP—that is, it had put in place a board chair that was certainly supportive of prepping the port for an asset sale. We know the LNP's history on this.

One of the biggest issues that I supported during that election campaign was the LNP had land for sale at Calliope that was proposed for a future Calliope high school. However, the LNP said that that block of land would never reach the potential to be a high school. Not only did the Premier and the treasurer at the time ensure we did not sell that block of land for a proposed high school at Calliope; there is now a \$66 million high school delivered for that community on that block of land that those opposite said would never be able to support a high school in the future. These are the types of investments that we know are good for this state and good for kids. These are just a couple of examples that I have seen firsthand in my time as the member for Gladstone in terms of the hypocrisy from those opposite saying that we are the only ones that sell assets. I have seen firsthand what sales those opposite were preparing to do under their government and one can only imagine what those asset sales would have been if those opposite had won government in 2015.

A silver lining to challenges such as these is that they can prompt us to be creative in making these changes, they can prompt us to be innovative and they can also streamline the ways in which we work as Queenslanders. That is how my department is rising to the challenge that is before us. The first of these ways of working is the steps being taken to support one of the key provisions of this bill—the creation of the Queensland Titles Registry as the operator for titles in our state. As other jurisdictions have seen, establishing Titles Registry operations in such a way provides greater opportunity for innovation and investment, better customer outcomes and, importantly, the ability to contribute to debt reduction in this state.

Queensland's water markets also stand to benefit from this opportunity for innovation. The creation of a registrar of water allocations in my department to contribute guidance and oversight to the operation of the Queensland Titles Registry will be an essential step in ensuring the success of this bill. As minister responsible for the Water Act 2000 I am pleased to recommend the amendments that this bill proposes to that act, but they are not the only opportunity for savings through streamlining of government services that my department is enacting either.

At present, the allocation and management of quarry materials is managed across multiple Queensland government departments. This includes the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Department of Environment and Science, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, and my own Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water. That is before we even address the interests of the Department of Transport and Main Roads or the Department of Resources in the efficient management of quarries in this state. This function too is ripe with opportunities for streamlining. As a result of this I am proud to lead a process to find opportunities to reduce duplication and to streamline the management of quarries here in Queensland. This process will make a recommendation to government in mid-2022.

A third measure to foster innovation, improve customer experience and, importantly, reduce costs, is my department's implementation of the Building Queensland's Rural Water Future program or, simply put, Rural Water Futures. This three-year priority program is identifying and delivering improvements to how my department meets its responsibilities to oversee the measurement, monitoring and reporting of water that we use right across the state. By adopting innovative digital systems to deliver productivity and efficiency gains, Rural Water Futures will enable business process systemisation and automation. Together this will free staff from routine, low-value, time-consuming tasks, give staff flexibility to work from any location and enable them to focus on high-value inquiries and transactions to deliver improved services to many of our customers here in Queensland, particularly in regional Queensland.

To put it simply, better systems mean more data for water users to make good investment decisions, grow their businesses in regional Queensland and contribute to our rebounding economy; they mean better opportunities for public servants to focus on high-value work that delivers high-quality customer experiences; they mean better outcomes for the environment, ensuring water is managed sustainably and that water users can access their fair share of water; and with the replacement of legacy systems with significant maintenance requirements, and certainly costs, they mean a better outcome for the budget's bottom line. That is a win-win-win-win.

Finally, there is also the small everyday ways my department is delivering savings and contributing to the debt reduction. I am talking about things like using current resources and vacant positions to staff our planned new manufacturing hubs on the Gold Coast and in Mackay rather than seeking new resources. I am proud to say that we will be opening those two facilities on the Gold Coast and in Mackay some time in the near future.

It is the responsibility of every department to do the work of debt reduction and savings as Queensland and the Queensland government recovers from the economic harm that was wrought by COVID-19. We can deliver those savings through innovation. We can deliver them in a way that means better services for Queenslanders and smarter ways of working for our staff. That is how my department is delivering on its responsibilities to find savings and reduce debt here in Queensland. That is the kind of innovation that the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 stands to foster across all parts of the Queensland government.

I acknowledge the work that the Treasurer and his department, and every other ministers' department here in Queensland, has put towards this bill to ensure that this bill does exactly what it says and that is to reduce debt and deliver savings so that we can continue to do the great work that Labor governments do here in Queensland. We know the great work that we have done in the last six

years and the great work we will continue to do in the next six years. The Queensland Labor government will continue to act responsibly with the economy and continue to deliver for those people who have put their support in us over the last six years. On that basis I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (4.33 pm): I rise to contribute to the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I begin with the story of one of my constituents. Her name is Debbie. Here is what she has said—

We knew it was coming after hearing rumours about what Campbell Newman was about to do to public servants. After 28 years (at the time) of dedicated public service I never thought the important role I held within my department (the Queensland Police Service) would be cut.

On 7 January 2013, my colleagues and I were collected, one by one, by our manager, each returning to the office in tears. When my turn came I was told that my position was not required in the new structure of the department. I was devastated but stayed on to continue the work I performed at the time to assist the future of the work unit while knowing I would not be part of it.

Debbie goes on to say—

I arrived home that day to the loving arms of my family and thought my career was over. I felt like the Government at the time did not care about me when I considered myself a 'career public servant' who was looking to one day retire with 40+ years of service. I wondered how I would continue to provide for my family and would I be able to find another job. I had not known any other career apart from public service and for those years I had prided myself on the work I did and on my work commitment. I felt like I had lost a family member.

These were the words of one of my constituents after being sacked by the Newman government. We have heard those opposite criticise Labor's plans for saving and debt reduction. Listening to this debate has afforded me the opportunity to reflect. I fail to understand the self-assured platform upon which those opposite languish. Those opposite have only held government once in 23 years and only briefly for 34 months during which time the LNP's only fiscal policy was executed using the most simplistic—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Mansfield, I might draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Ms McMILLAN**:—ill-informed, amateur and unintelligent means. That is hardly adequate experience to speak with such conviction. Cut, sack and sell strategies that are not drawn from sound economic theories nor of sound monetary policy—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Mansfield, I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Ms McMILLAN**:—such as the sacking of 14,000 public servants. Fourteen hundred public servants from the community of Mansfield like Debbie lost their job during the years from 2012 to 2014, which proved only to reduce spending in our local communities.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Mansfield, for the third time can I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Ms McMILLAN**: I appreciate your advice, Deputy Speaker. My electorate of Mansfield will never forget what the LNP did to our community. This is significant legislation that will support the state's contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund first established under the Queensland Future Fund Act 2020. The bill allows for the pooling of income from state government investments and it is expected that increased levels of equity will support the retention of our AAA rating from major credit agencies.

The Queensland government takes very seriously our responsibility to the people of Queensland to pay down debt over time, but we do not apologise to those members opposite for expending borrowed funds, increasing government debt to keep Queenslanders safe and to grow our economy in the midst of the most dangerous pandemic in a century still raging in many countries across the world. Right from the first briefing from Queensland Health that spelled out the dangers of COVID-19, the Premier was committed to doing whatever it took to save the lives and livelihoods of Queenslanders. While the then Leader of the Opposition flip-flopped around on whether saving the economy was more important than protecting the health of Queenslanders, our Premier secured the funds to do what needed to be done—that was to save lives. COVID-19 has finally slayed the neoliberal bogeyman of debt and deficit.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Mansfield, for the fourth time please come back to the bill. At least mention the bill every now and then.

**Ms McMILLAN**: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. For decades we have been subject to the myth of superior coalition economic management whose conservative ideology ridiculed the federal Labor debt of the global financial crisis which saved a nation from recession and maintained full employment. When

Labor's debt reached \$48 billion the federal LNP said it was unbearable. At \$90 billion it was crippling. At \$153 billion it was exorbitant and at \$160 billion Labor was addicted to debt. In the following years of coalition governments debt rose in successive budgets to \$210 billion, to \$246 billion, to \$303 billion, to \$322 billion, to \$342 billion and, as COVID-19 arrived, to \$488 billion, to \$677 billion, at which point the Prime Minister said the debt was manageable, and in the recent budget statement the LNP coalition landed a deficit of \$161 billion and a debt just shy of \$1 trillion.

When it came to protecting Australian citizens from COVID-19, the federal government suddenly dispensed with its obsession with surpluses and its belief that markets deliver benefits to the economy, not government intervention or planning. Now debt was good and government intervention was necessary. Yet, before the virus, when it was proposed that the Indigenous first owners of this land be recompensed for loss, they said it was too expensive. When it was proposed that dangerous climate change be properly managed, they said it would trash our economy. When it was proposed that we create an energy plan that transitioned from fossil fuel to renewables, we were told it would smash jobs and the economy.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Mansfield, mentioning the bill every now and then would be helpful. I know we have had a wideranging discussion, but just come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr BROWN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member has been talking about debt for the past two minutes. I have been listening in regards to that. That goes exactly to the title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have made a ruling, member for Capalaba. Please resume your seat. Member for Mansfield, just mention the bill every now and again.

**Ms McMILLAN:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I appreciate that. We will manage debt responsibly over the ensuing years through the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. When it was proposed that equality of opportunity for women be better managed through free childhood, we were told that the federal LNP government could not afford it. When concerns were raised about the level of casual employment in the workforce, we were told that the economy could not provide a full-time job for everyone. When it was proposed that infrastructure be built to service regional Australia through very fast rail and NBN technology, we were told that there was no money for that. When it was proposed that government drought proof this land through major infrastructure work, we were told that the costs would be prohibitive. When asked for free university education, the LNP stated that that was not possible.

The double standards of the LNP's economic management philosophy are laid bare for all to see. We will not be lectured to about debt and deficit by this opposition which no longer knows what it believes about managing an economy. We are guided by the principle that an economy works for the people, not the other way around. We will manage debt responsibly over the ensuing years through the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021.

I reflect on my time as a school principal during the LNP years in government in Queensland. At that time I spent many sleepless nights as I worried about my vulnerable students and their families because of the closure of the Barrett adolescent mental health centre; threats to close my school, which is now a thriving school of more than 900 students; cuts to the Inala Youth Service; cuts to local emergency accommodation providers; cuts to programs that support students who have been suspended or who are disengaged from school; cuts to traineeships and apprenticeships; cuts to the FTE numbers of teachers; the sacking of child safety workers; and cuts to domestic violence services.

Whilst I was desperately trying to find the funds from my school budget to ensure my students and their families survived, they engaged in punitive and disgraceful measures such as instructing teachers not to make colour photocopies for class work and not to order class sets of newspapers as part of student learning experiences.

I will finish with some wise words from one of the world's most successful investors, Warren Buffet. He said—

If you're in the luckiest one per cent of humanity, you owe it to the rest of humanity to think about the other 99 per cent.

He also said—

Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.

Plant a tree or trees we will do. The Palaszczuk government will continue to invest today to ensure a strong economy for tomorrow as that is what a Labor government does. I commend this bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Before I call the member for Cook, I remind members of the long title of the bill. I will give a fair bit of latitude to people because that is what has been happening over the past couple of days of this debate. I ask members to please mention the bill every now and then, to keep me happy.

**Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. The bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the committee for examination on 25 March 2021. During the examination of the bill the committee carried out extensive work to ensure that Queenslanders were being heard through the submission and public hearing process. I acknowledge the Treasurer for all of his work in keeping the economic interests of Queenslanders front and centre as we move through these challenging times. This strong economic plan affirms the Queensland government's commitment to implementing a savings and debt plan that is intended to deliver \$3 billion in budgetary savings over the four-year period from 2020-21 to 2023-24 to support Queensland's economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19.

I am proud to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill because, to put it simply, it is a good honest bill. The first chapter of the bill goes into detail about this government's intention to reduce our debts and produce an economic surplus. The Queensland Future Fund Act creates the first Future Fund, the Debt Retirement Fund, to hold state investments for future growth. A key aim of the Debt Retirement Fund is to support the state's credit rating by achieving recognition of the value of the fund by rating agencies against the state's debt. Currently, the Titles Registry is not recognised as an asset on the state's balance sheet. This bill is important because it protects Queensland's public assets against privatisation by a future LNP government as we on this side of the House know all too well that an LNP government's response to debt reduction would be to cut, sack and sell. They have done it before and they will do it again.

I take those opposite back to a little over 12 months ago to remind them that it was this government that took the necessary steps to declare a public health emergency due to COVID-19 in this state. This government had no time to waste. This government, the Palaszczuk government, hit the ground running to enforce measures to safeguard Queenslanders. This government stepped up to invest in our health system to increase our service capacity around the state. This government released a stimulus package to provide support for households and businesses to assist with the earliest impacts of COVID-19.

Cook is one of the most vulnerable communities in Queensland with the largest number of discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as well as many elderly people; those factors clearly place my electorate in the most vulnerable category in this state. Given the vastness of the region, the government worked collaboratively with government and non-government agencies to achieve the best outcomes for people living in the electorate of Cook. We worked with the federal government to initiate restrictions to slow the traffic of people into and out of Cape York and the Torres Strait. I commend the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health for monitoring the passage of people entering Cape York through Cairns Airport and the Mulligan Highway on the Tablelands. We provided quarantine options for people returning to Cape York and the Torres Strait, as tough as that decision was, and we covered all bases to keep COVID from entering any one of the communities in my electorate.

When our schools shut their doors, this government worked with local communities on Cape York and in the Torres Strait to coordinate a strong response to get our kids back into their communities safely and to help them to continue their educational outcomes during that period. We worked closely with the HHS in my region to ensure that there were strong local and regional health plans to coordinate any future threat of COVID. We stood up fever clinics in Mareeba, Mossman, Weipa and Thursday Island, amongst other places in my electorate. I had the pleasure of visiting fever clinics in Mossman and on Thursday Island. I can tell the House that it was enlightening to see the local health professionals getting behind this government's response to safeguard local people and local communities and to fight—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Cook, I draw you back to the long title of the bill. You started really well, but are you drifting away a bit.

**Ms LUI:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I feel it is important to put into perspective the challenges for communities in my electorate and the measures that this government took to safeguard those communities. Highlighting the vast region of my electorate and the communities that are scattered throughout Far North Queensland is important in this debate because all of the government investment into regional and remote Queensland was done to safeguard those communities and to keep COVID out. Any investment was critical.



We knew that COVID was having a huge impact on our economic position in this state and I saw this throughout my communities. Our small business COVID grant is just another example of this government stepping up to the plate and assisting industries in far-flung regions. It was to support people getting through the impacts of COVID-19. Deputy Speaker, I can see you smiling.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Come back to the long title of the bill, please, member for Cook.

**Ms LUI:** The conversation about reducing state debt goes back to the investments we made in communities. We invested in hospitals, roads and services throughout Queensland. The reason underlying all of that was to keep Queensland safe. All these investments were critical to not only safeguarding our communities but also supporting and putting people back into jobs.


I want to speak about the track record of those opposite. We know that during the Campbell Newman era of government there was a lot of cutting. We saw that 14,000 government workers were sacked, some from hospitals right across Queensland. We saw nurses lose their jobs as a result of decisions the LNP government made. In a global pandemic it scares me to think of the LNP in government, knowing what their decisions will mean for Queensland. We face future cutting, sacking and selling of all of our resources across Queensland.

**Ms Richards:** Frontline services.

**Ms LUI:** I take the interjection. It is about protecting frontline services.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Cook, please return to the long title of the bill—maybe the lands office. Do you want to talk about that?

**Ms LUI:** I will not go any further. I believe this is a very important bill for Queensland. This government is doing all it can to reduce the debt in this state. More importantly, we are here working for Queensland—unlike those opposite, who like to sack, cut and sell every opportunity they get.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (4.52 pm): I rise to speak on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. The Palaszczuk government is delivering Queensland's plan for economic recovery and, thanks to the efforts of all Queenslanders, this government is able to get on with the job of creating jobs. We are already seeing that in action. In fact, since the pandemic first impacted Australia in March last year, Queensland has seen the largest growth in jobs in the country. As we speak, we are rolling out a \$56 billion infrastructure guarantee, record investment in schools, hospitals and transport, and close to a billion dollars this year to protect our environment and create jobs.

Young people are making the most of Free TAFE for under 25s, and Queenslanders are upskilling in droves with new opportunities for traineeships and apprenticeships on projects right throughout the state. In our national parks, 800 jobs are being created with a \$50 million investment into new upgrades and investment in new renewable energy projects like our renewable energy zones, with one of those announced last week. We are unlocking projects like the Kaban wind farm, which is helping to turn Queensland into a renewable energy powerhouse.

This bill is a key component to continuing to deliver our economic recovery plan. It is a bill that will protect Queensland from the LNP's well-known debt reduction agenda to cut, sack and sell. Queenslanders will never forget when those opposite, under Campbell Newman and his ministers, including the Leader of the Opposition, cut 14,000 jobs—cut from vital services and projects right across the state—and tried to sell our public assets. When I speak to many people in my community today, they still talk about Campbell Newman and the LNP's razor gang. Those opposite pretend that these people are just numbers on a spreadsheet, but I assure them they are not. It is that arrogance of denying the very real impact which has led to those opposite being members of the opposition.

There are many examples that I can think of within my community. When I was doorknocking in 2019, I met with a woman by the name of Carmen, from memory, who lost her job at the Gold Coast University Hospital under the Newman government. We have been speaking to young Queenslanders across the state around the importance of access to mental health services. Under the debt reduction plan of those opposite it was proposed to close the Barrett Adolescent Centre, which was providing critical services to young Queenslanders.

It is the Palaszczuk government that will make sensible, prudent savings—savings that will ensure that our frontline services are sustainable and focused on the needs of the public—not debt reduction in the LNP sense of the word which, simply put, means one thing: to cut, sack and sell. When the LNP talk about savings and debt reduction, they mean gutting the front line, ripping healthcare and education services and taking away jobs from mums and dads right across Queensland—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Interjections will cease. Minister, to be consistent, I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Ms SCANLON:** As I said, when the LNP talk about savings and debt reduction, we know—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Ms SCANLON:** When it comes to responsible measures of savings and debt reduction, under our bill we have a very clear plan. The opposition had a very different plan. The member for Chatsworth, who was an assistant minister in the Newman government, told parliament that past behaviour is indeed the best way to predict future actions. Who can forget when they sacked 16 QBuild workers on the Gold Coast just before Christmas or when they sacked 54 nurses and midwives from local health services?

Unlike the LNP, the Palaszczuk government makes sensible savings that do not cut frontline services and do not hurt Queenslanders. That is what this bill achieves. It reduces debt, increases the efficiency of government by reducing the number of statutory authorities, improves how fees and charges are set, and reduces the cost of government advertising, securing \$3 million in direct savings.

One part of our broader \$3 million program is sensible savings. As the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, I can say that my department has implemented a number of measures to drive our economic recovery. For example, it has reduced travel, conferences, workshops and other supplies and services such as photocopying and telecommunications—for example, desk phones; reduced contractors and prioritised delivery outcomes across departmental programs and through a refocusing of grant programs; reduced paper use as part of the department's digital transformation; reduced advertising activities—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! No-one is on the warning list at the moment, but I will put some people there shortly.

**Ms SCANLON:**—focusing on digital and online information and communication directly with consumers and stakeholders through electronic communications; reduced the department's social media channels from 15 to eight; significantly limited the production of printed material and no longer prints glossy brochures; ensured annual reports and other documents have been simplified and streamlined and are published online as opposed to being printed; and ensured a highly disciplined approach is being applied to all sponsorship activities. These are what sensible measures look like.

When we look at what is happening in other states like Victoria and New South Wales, which have suffered credit downgrades, only Queensland has kept its secure position of major jurisdictions, a fiscal position kept strong after those opposite, the LNP, delivered a credit rating negative outlook for Queensland—that was their savings and debt reduction plan—a black mark thanks to the member for Clayfield and his colleagues like the opposition leader, who ruined the lives of thousands of families across Queensland. Guess which government got it removed? It was the Palaszczuk government.


We have rebuilt Queensland's financial capabilities, restored its credit metrics and, despite the pandemic, kept our economy moving. If those opposite had their way, we would be back to the debt reduction days of 'Nuclear Newman'. In fact, now he is back in the executive of the LNP and I am sure he is pulling the strings and making the moves behind the scenes, plotting once again to cut workers while telling them they have nothing to fear. It is reminiscent of a time when he, the opposition leader, the member for Everton, the member for Clayfield and plenty of others opposite had a debt reduction agenda of sacking 14,000 government workers, despite telling them they had nothing to fear; cutting around 4,400 health worker jobs, including 1,800 nurses and midwives; slashing \$288 million in employment programs, including Skilling Queenslanders for Work—a great program for young Queenslanders across this state; axing \$368 million in grants to the department of communities to support Queenslanders in need of assistance—you only need talk to the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre in my electorate to understand the impacts that had on my community; cutting \$120 million in funding to community groups from Queensland Health; cutting \$60 million from local government grants and subsidies; axing tenant advisory services; cutting the air travel subsidy scheme on Cape York, as the member for Cook just outlined; cutting the Premier's Literary Awards; and shutting seven schools.

They say they want to change, but how can we believe them when former Newman ministers, like the opposition leader, are running the show? In stark contrast, this government will continue to deliver Queensland's economic recovery plan while making sensible savings. We will deliver a \$56 billion infrastructure guarantee and more frontline positions in health, police, education and emergency services. We will invest close to a billion dollars to create jobs and protect our environment.

Debate, on motion of Ms Scanlon, adjourned.

## MOTION

### Youth Crime

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

This House:

1. condemns the Labor government for losing control of youth crime and failing to keep families safe and secure; and
2. calls on the Labor government to restore the offence of breach of bail for youth offenders.

The front page of the *Townsville Bulletin* today says it all—“Military” style security to patrol the city: Boots on the ground’. I table that front page.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 26 May 2021, titled “Military” style security to patrol the city: Boots on the Ground’ [721].

Encompassed within that article is the details of a security company offering services to the people of Townsville. The article states that they are going to ‘look like a SWAT team’, which proves once and for all that this government has completely lost control of juvenile crime in the city of Townsville. Townsville is a city under siege, and I do not say that lightly. It is a city at the mercy of a group of young offenders who are ripping the guts out of that city.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I think you will find that that language is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr LAST:** I withdraw. They are ripping the heart out of that community and those opposite are clearly powerless to do anything about it. For goodness sake, we are talking about Townsville, North Queensland. We are not talking about South Africa. We now have a security company dressed like SWAT officers doing patrols. Is that what we have come to in Townsville—where residents now have armed security guards out the front of their houses, security guards to take their kids to school and security guards to protect them? Surely not. In this day and age, the community should not have to put up with a crime problem which has spiralled out of control, and that mob opposite are powerless to do anything about it.

Cars are being stolen. They are being driven in convoys through the city. In the member for Thuringowa’s patch they are doing burnouts in the car park at the back of the Kirwan Police Station. They are ramming police vehicles. They are going down to the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and doing burnouts outside the detention centre so their mates inside can hear them. And people wonder what is going on in Townsville!

When we have a look at Labor’s track record when it comes to juvenile crime in that city over the last five years we find it is abysmal. Think about the bail houses and what a failure they were. They ran for three years and 82 per cent of the young people in those houses reoffended. They claim they were not cost-effective when they were actually incubators for reoffenders. Between December 2018 and December 2020, 3,744 distinct young people reoffended.

We have 10- to 13-year-old criminals offending at sky-high rates. Let us have a look at that. Between 2018-19 and 2019-20 there were a total of 9,885 proven offences and this government has a plan to raise the age of criminal responsibility. Is that their answer to addressing juvenile crime in this state? Is their answer to raise the bar and raise the age of criminal responsibility so that that cohort all of a sudden are not captured?


I have to tell the House that a kid driving a car at 130 kilometres an hour through a school zone is just as capable of killing someone as a 15- or 16-year-old. A kid waving a knife in that community and doing a home invasion to steal car keys is just as capable of injuring or killing someone as an adult. There was the Church’s Disposal Store break-in—the three Townsville members will know that one pretty well. Some 100 knives and machetes were stolen in that break-in last weekend. Where do members think they are going to end up?

What is this government going to say when those knives and machetes are used in home invasions? What position does that put the community in? More importantly, what does it do for our emergency responders? Think about the police officers who are going to be responding to incidents and then have a kid come at them with a knife or machete. It sends shivers down my spine and it sends shivers down the spine of everyone in Townsville.

The crime situation in Townsville is completely out of control and that community has had enough. I now have had parents ringing me saying that they are not sending their kids to university in Townsville next year because they fear for their safety. I now have families uprooting their entire family,

giving up their jobs and moving out of the community in fear for their safety. That is a disgrace and a blight on this government. Over a period of five years and, in the minister's own words, after \$600 million being spent on youth justice, we are seeing no change.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'House' be omitted and the following inserted:

- '1. acknowledges the Palaszczuk government's record investment and measures to support community safety in Queensland; and
2. notes the recent legislative amendments to strengthen community safety laws in Queensland were supported by the LNP.'

All Queenslanders have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities. We expect young people to be law abiding and when they are not we expect them to be accountable. That is why we have invested more than half a billion dollars in more detention centre beds for offenders and in early intervention programs to stop offending in the first instance and to stop reoffending. We know that we must have programs to divert and we must have facilities to detain, and we are investing in both. This is in addition to more police on the ground. Community safety is paramount and community confidence essential.

Across Queensland our government and my department are investing in programs that hold young people to account and give them the opportunity to turn their lives around. We have invested in programs like: Transition 2 Success to get young people back into education and training to get a job; restorative justice conferencing to take responsibility and make amends to those victims affected by their offending; integrated case management to work intensively with young people and their families to address the drivers of offending; conditional bail programs; bail support programs; co-responder teams with police and youth justice; and on-country programs in Mount Isa, Townsville and Cairns. These are just some of the programs we fund to hold young people to account, divert young people from offending and keep our community safe, because community safety is paramount and community confidence is essential.

In addition to these programs, we have boosted capacity in our youth detention centres by 33 per cent with expanded capacity at Brisbane and Cleveland youth detention centres. We have built a new centre, the West Moreton Youth Detention Centre. We know there is no quick fix, no silver bullet to fix youth crime. We also know these initiatives are working. We have seen a 30 per cent drop in the number of young offenders across the state over the past 10 years. We know that most young people do not commit crime—one or two per cent. We know that, of those who do, most will never come back into contact with the criminal justice system after a first offence. We also know that this is cold comfort to those who have been affected by youth crime. It is 10 per cent of young offenders who are committing almost 50 per cent of offences, and it is this cohort that we are targeting. We heard clearly from the community that they want more done in relation to the 10 per cent of repeat offenders, and we listened. We will always listen and we will always act.

Under new measures announced in February this year, we have further strengthened the youth justice bail framework by: providing the court with an additional tool, the use of electronic monitoring devices as a condition of bail for recidivist offenders aged 16 or 17; creating a presumption against bail for youth offenders to show cause why bail should be granted; and codifying the existing common law principle that offending while on bail is an aggravating factor when imposing a sentence. These new laws send an even clearer message to offenders and the courts: the parliament and the community expect high-risk offenders to be kept off our streets.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will direct his comments through the chair.

**Ms LINARD:** Community safety is paramount and community confidence is essential. Contrast our strong response—our evidence based approach—with that of those opposite. The member for Burdekin beats his chest and says in this House, 'It needs to stop and it needs to stop now.' They did not have one when they were in government, so what is their magic fix now? While those opposite politicise a serious issue, while those opposite feed the fears of people in our community, we roll up our sleeves and take strong action. That is the difference between being in opposition and being in government. It is all care and no responsibility in the current opposition. Mind you, it was the same when they were in government.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Gregory is warned under the standing orders.


**Ms LINARD:** They had no plan and no idea—other than failed boot camps. Our government has a plan. Our government is making record investment to strengthen community safety. It is our government that passed strong legislation in this House—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease his interjections.

**Ms LINARD:**—just last month that even those opposite voted for. Instead of playing politics, why don't you get on board!

**Mr SPEAKER:** A reminder to the minister and other future speakers: we will be directing our comments through the chair, not to those across the chamber.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (5.10 pm): I support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. The minister can say that there is no silver bullet and that it takes time to solve these problems. It reminds me of the people who apologised for the failure of communism because they say, 'Communism just wasn't done properly. It just wasn't done well enough.' The minister is saying that, if we are a bit nicer and a bit softer to this hardened cohort of youth criminals, it will solve the problem.

How long does a government need? They have been in office now more than six years. The problem is not getting any better; it is actually getting a lot worse. We can see that from some of the statistics. There are 340 hardened youth offenders in Queensland now. Back in 2014-15, I remember that there were court reports and statistics that said the number was about 148. The hardened cohort has more than doubled in the time that this government has been in office. It is a disgrace. It shows Labor's true colours. They are always soft on crime, but they are also hopeless at dealing with the causes of crime. That is why they stand to be condemned by this motion: because of that hardened cohort which continues to wreak havoc around Queensland.

Young criminals in this state, especially that hardened cohort, treat the youth justice system as a joke. They know that they can get arrested, go to court, be released on bail and offend again the next day. There is no plan at the moment to deal with that. We have seen changes to do with reviewing bail applications. That was about the police being able to review people who were released on bail. There were 1,600 grants of bail during the time that that has been in operation. How many of the 1,600 have been reviewed by police? Eight grants of bail have been reviewed.

Far from doing anything about the problem, the government has all this window-dressing about getting tough on people who are released on bail, but in fact they do not do anything. That is before we even mention bail houses and the failed experiment that that was. The minister came in on the day of estimates last year and announced that bail houses were going to be scrapped in order to avoid questions about them.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I like members talking about boot camps because there was a very good report from KPMG which said boot camps were working.

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Maryborough will cease his interjections.

**Mr KRAUSE:** They were working, member for Maryborough. They needed to be given more time to work.

**Mr Saunders:** 'F' for fail.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It was during the time of the LNP government when the incidence of youth crime in this state actually went down, member for Maryborough. We have seen essentially the same policy settings from the Labor Party over the past 10 or 15 years. Basically they have had the same policy the whole time.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Member for Ninderry and member for Maryborough, you are both warned for quarrelling across the chamber. Member for Gregory, you can leave the chamber. You are on a warning and you are consistently interjecting.

**Mr Millar:** Just once.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Not just once, member.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 5.13 pm.*


**Mr KRAUSE:** The KPMG report said the early intervention youth boot camps were working and they needed to be given more time to succeed. I will remind members opposite that the only time in the past 15 years when youth crime has gone down in this state was when the LNP were in office. It has been going up ever since the change of government in 2015. The statistics bear that out. The government cannot escape responsibility for a failed youth justice system.

We also heard the police minister criticising magistrates for their decisions. How dare the government criticise the judiciary and the independence of the judiciary! I can only imagine the outrage if members on this side of the House had questioned the independence of the judiciary. It is outrageous that the Minister for Police, a minister of the Crown in such a high office, would criticise the independence of our judiciary, but that is what they did because they are burying their heads in the sand about this issue of youth crime. It is a case of 'do as I say, not as I do' when it comes to Labor, especially when it comes to youth crime and issues of the judiciary.

Youth crime is the government's responsibility. Labor needs to fix the problem it has allowed to foster—not just in this six years but in the 14 years of government before that as well. They are essentially doing the same thing. It does not work. They need to change course. They need to admit that they need to change course.

One thing they need to admit is that detention needs to be used more often for this hardened cohort. We need to protect the community. Put the interests of your community first. Do the hard yards and lock up some of these repeat hardened offenders for the protection of the community. It is not ideal; that is for sure. We know it is not ideal, but it needs to be done for the protection of the community whilst we put in place effective early intervention measures like the ones that the LNP championed and which KPMG said needed to be continued to prove their worth into the future.

*(Time expired)*

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.16 pm): The motion today proposed by the LNP opposition is just another sensationalised political stunt—the type of cheap stunt that Queenslanders have grown tired of. Through the long, hard years of LNP opposition we have seen these cheap stunts pulled out by those opposite, be it in health or crime or whatever else. More often than not, the attacks by those opposite miss the mark entirely, landing inadvertent blows on the hardworking health professionals, child safety workers or police in our state.

Here in this moment we rewind right back to the couple of short, fleeting horror years when the LNP were on the government bench here in Queensland. It seems they simply cannot stop attacking public servants. They simply cannot help themselves. Public servants are always public enemy No. 1—well, maybe a close No. 2, right after a socialist or even a young person.

The LNP simply cannot help themselves when it comes to these cheap political stunts and attacks. That is why I support the minister's amended motion in respect of the complex and difficult issues facing our communities with our young people. Rather than political stunts, this Palaszczuk government is focused on tackling the big issues. These are tough, complex issues that require multi-agency approaches, and some of those approaches do not see immediate results. They take commitment. Our focus remains resolute to reduce crime, to keep our communities safe and to ensure young offenders are held to account for their actions.

Nowhere in Queensland is immune to recidivist youth offenders. They are an issue in my electorate, as they are in many others. Just a couple of weeks ago here in this place we passed additional measures to tackle the very small number of recidivist youth offenders in our communities and ensure more personal responsibility for those young people.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** Despite the toxic, repeated rhetoric from those opposite—the ramblings that they are going on with right now—youth crime has dramatically fallen under the Palaszczuk government.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** They do not like to hear it, Mr Speaker, but that is a fact.

**Mr Minnikin:** Enjoy your next trip to Townsville!

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Chatsworth is warned under the standing orders.

**Ms BOYD:** We have deployed a multifaceted approach to keeping our community safe and to assisting young people who have committed offences to change their story because community safety is paramount and community confidence in our youth justice system is essential. I would encourage those opposite to read *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023*. It is our government's foundation policy direction for youth justice.

Young people who come into the youth justice system deserve an investment in their futures—an investment that helps them write a different story for themselves, for their families and for their communities. That is why we have invested in programs that will show them a different path and help them back into education, into training and into jobs such as our Transition 2 Success program, which does just that.


I see this program kicking goals every day in my electorate with organisations like the Youth Development Foundation, run by Jerry and the team. I love going to their Strathpine office and hearing firsthand stories about these young people from these young people who are rewriting their stories for themselves. T2S graduates have seen a 77 per cent reduction in offending. The LNP, regardless of the leader of the day, will always prefer a 'lock 'em up and throw away the key' approach, and this is where we differ. The LNP continually call for a breach of bail offence here in Queensland. Their finding of guilt while on bail, which is what the opposition now refer to as their breach of bail law, was in operation in Queensland throughout 2014 and 2016.

**Mr Harper:** Ninety per cent reoffended.

**Ms BOYD:** I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa: 90 per cent of those reoffended. It was a complete and utter failure. We repealed that offence because it simply did not reduce youth crime and could not be used to hold offenders to account. It rarely influenced the decision at the point of arrest or subsequent court appearances because the offence could not be used until after the finding of guilt, which could be weeks or even months after the second instance.

In 2015 the courts found that this ill-conceived legislation contradicted the Criminal Code rule against double punishment; therefore, even when a child was found guilty of a breach of bail offence they could not—I repeat: they could not—be given an additional penalty. Despite the proven ineffectiveness of this offence, the opposition continue to tout it as a solution to this very serious issue. As we hear time and time again, it is not proven to work. But like all—

*(Time expired)*

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.21 pm): I rise today to support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. This is a matter of great public interest in my electorate and across the width and breadth of this state; that is, the continuing rise in youth crime and the devastating impact it is having on our communities—an impact exacerbated by the government's unwillingness to reintroduce the LNP's breach of bail provisions to keep recidivist young criminals behind bars where they belong. Good people are having their lives wrecked by gangs of young hooligans on drugs who are out on bail and free to do as they please because the good men and women of our Police Service have their hands tied. They cannot hold these young crims and the courts do not have the laws to punish them. Instead, they are free to continue their criminal ways and their antisocial campaigns which threaten the peace and harmony of communities across Queensland.

In my electorate it is having a devastating impact. Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, about one example. A good friend of mine and a good friend to the community of Mudgeeraba is a tireless volunteer called Belinda. Without her and her band of helpers, the Mudgeeraba Redbacks Junior Rugby League Club would not operate. She works, she mothers, she gives to her community, and what does she get in return? The loss of her property, vandalism and sleepless nights filled with fear. Her car was stolen by young thieves in January this year after a 24-hour crime spree. Her family car was found filled with rubbish and seriously damaged. It ultimately had to be written off. The offenders were inside and duly arrested. Despite this being their 20th criminal offence, they were then released without detention. That is right, Mr Speaker: their 20th criminal offence. Twenty times they have been caught breaking the law; 20 times they have been released right back into the community they terrorised.

What do those opposite say? The youth justice minister says, 'As offenders change the way they offend we will have to be flexible and respond.' I ask you, Mr Speaker, what does that even mean? To Belinda it means that the car she worked hard to buy to ferry her children and teammates around is trashed, destroyed and written off. It was found with flat tyres, discarded clothes and unidentified suspicious materials in the back seat. She was told by the smash repairers to which it was towed that

it was too risky to let her even look inside. It means hours wasted dealing with insurance companies seeking to replace the car she worked so hard to buy so that she could support her family and her community.

The 13-year-old girl responsible told her, 'I didn't steal it. I just took it for a spin.' From those comments we can clearly see that she has no sense of responsibility for her actions and the impact of the crime. There were certainly no consequences. She was let off straight from the court to the streets. It is no wonder she has notched up 20 crimes.


This is more evidence that this government is losing control of Queensland. They are more concerned with hand-wringing and social experimentation than tackling this difficult and complex issue head-on. The minister said, 'We do not repeat the same thing which does not work.' Here is a tip, Minister: What you are doing is not working for Queenslanders—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Through the chair, member.

**Ms BATES:** I am sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker; through the chair. When they park their car at night they have the right to have it there in the morning. When an offender is caught and arrested, citizens have the right to expect a commensurate punishment for the crime. Instead, these thugs are released with no penalty and no encouragement or incentive to change their ways.

It may be too hard for Labor, but the LNP is ready to do something about this crime wave. That is why this morning we moved this motion to condemn the Palaszczuk government for its lack of action on youth crime and called on it to bring back breach of bail as an offence. These reforms demonstrate the type of leadership we need to see in this state. With hooning cartels running rampant on the Gold Coast, we also call on the Palaszczuk Labor government to adopt the LNP's tough hooning policies. We see the overlap between hoons and damage to public property amongst those other crimes. We see them posting their antics online, much like youth offenders. It keeps locals up at night. They do not feel safe in their beds under this Labor government.

We must put crime above politics and we must consider the livelihoods of those at risk in our communities. We must take on the crims and steer them away from a life of crime. We must guarantee that the good people of Mudgeeraba can live their lives, including the selfless community support they provide, without fear. Enough is enough!

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (5.25 pm): The Palaszczuk government has introduced a range of changes targeting hardcore recidivist youth offenders. This includes introducing tougher bail laws, which means that recidivist offenders will stay in custody unless they can convince a court they are no longer a risk to community safety. This is important as it reverses the onus of bail. These new laws have only been in place for less than a month and already we are seeing results. Just last week police said that, in the 20 days since the laws targeting recidivist offenders were put in place, they have arrested more than 50 juvenile offenders and half of those were already being held in custody. As Northern Region Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler said, 'Those figures would suggest that these laws are working.'

Also as part of the suite of changes courts will need to seek assurances from parents and guardians that bail conditions will be complied with before an offender is able to be released. The courts in Townsville have already cited this new legislation during a recent case. We introduced a trial of electronic monitoring devices for 16- and 17-year-olds which gives courts more options yet again. Importantly, the Palaszczuk government continues to back our police force with more personnel, more resources and more facilities. During the election we announced there will be 2,025 new police personnel deployed throughout Queensland, including 150 new staff for the northern region. Contrast that with those opposite, whose election announcement meant a cut of 90 in the northern region alone. We back 'em; they sack 'em.

There is no single solution for youth crime. What I will say is that any instance of crime is unacceptable, but the new laws this government has introduced are already seeing results. They have been welcomed by Police Commissioner Katarina Carroll and the Queensland Police Service. The LNP's only plan for youth crime was a thought bubble: curfew policy. Where were they going to go? Thought bubble again: let's round them up and put them in the PCYC so police can look after them through the night. What happens with them the next morning? Another great thought bubble: we will charge parents \$250 to pick them up. What happens if parents do not pick them up? 'I'll get back to you.' Is it any wonder senior police in Townsville said this policy would not work? Here we are once again having to tread old ground with the nonsense the LNP are trotting out about breach of bail.




Mr Deputy Speaker, let's be clear about this: breach of bail has never existed for youth offenders. The offence those opposite actually introduced in 2014 was an offence better referred to as the act of committing an offence while on bail. It did not reduce breaches of bail by young people. It did nothing to deter or reduce crime. In fact, it just did not work.

The facts are that while in government their policy did not work and judging by this motion they do not even know what they had in place. Further, of the 185 young people who were convicted of the LNP's so-called breach of bail offence, over 90 reoffended within 12 months and 94 reoffended within two years. In Townsville there were fewer than 40 young people convicted of this new offence while it was in effect, with over 90 per cent reoffending within 12 months. I consider that a complete failure.

Courts can already take into account the fact that an offence was committed on bail when sentencing a young person and can provide a harsher punishment. In fact our recent amendment has enshrined this principle in legislation to ensure that courts consider the fact that a young person who commits an offence whilst on bail is an aggravating circumstance in sentencing.

As we have said and as the minister has said, no amount of crime is acceptable and this government makes no apologies for cracking down on this behaviour. Our work in strengthening these laws is not the only way to try to stop reoffending. Investing in programs like Project Booyah, Transition 2 Success and the Clontarf and Stars academies is important as they do change lives. We will back all parts of the system to tackle youth crime throughout the state with well-thought-out ideas, unlike those opposite. I support the amended motion.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (5.30 pm): I rise to speak in support of the LNP motion. It is incredibly sad that what we have seen largely over many months is that the antisocial behaviour in the main street of Southport has degenerated to such a point now that we are seeing direct assaults and wilful damage. The member for Burdekin mentioned this, but the *Townsville Bulletin* is not the only newspaper that carries these stories on the front page. Just the other day we read the story with the headline 'Vigilante father'. The article stated—

A Gold Coast dad has been fined for attacking a boy with a wooden stake after a group of teens had stomped on his son's head.

The dad was fined \$500, with no conviction recorded, after he tried to help his boy, 15, who had been bullied and beaten up by the group.

The man cannot be named to protect his son's identity.

Magistrate Cameron McKenzie said he understood the reasons for the man's "vigilante-type conduct" but he "cannot put himself in that position".

The response to that article and what has happened has been incredible. I do not think it would be appropriate to read some of the text messages here given they contain some fairly unparliamentary language from some members of my community. It is sad that we are starting to see this sort of thing happen on an everyday basis.

Just a week ago I received a phone call from the principal of one of the many colleges in Southport. There are 28 colleges. Some of them have international students and a lot of them provide education services to Aussie kids as well. A group of young girls left this particular college and were on their way to Australia Fair Shopping Centre to get some lunch and they were set upon by a group of juveniles who threatened them and demanded that they hand over their handbags and cigarettes. They did not have any cigarettes. One of the group then proceeded to knock this beautiful young 17-year-old girl to the ground. They kicked her and they stomped her on the head as well and she ended up with significant injuries. I am pleased to say that the officer in charge at Southport Police Station got straight onto it and the particular individual on this occasion was arrested. We will wait with bated breath to see what happens once they get to court.

I received this text message the other day and I want to share it as well. It states—

... was just looking for a bit of guidance about these young juveniles that ... been hanging out near the Telstra building and harassing people. Apparently there's a group of 12 to 13 year-old kids ... should be in school have been spending quite a bit of time in Southport giving people grief. Just wondering if this is a matter for police or ... should try to get child safety involved?


We have been working through that with our community consultative committee. I received a text message from another person, which stated—

... we have a problem in front of the Telstra building and near the old ambulance station. Not homeless but groups of young people—

I will not say where they are from or talk about the full extent of the text message, but it continued by saying that they were hassling people. Also, some broke into their bar, graffitied the front of it and smashed the front window. Only a few days ago I had a call from Study Gold Coast because some young men urinated on the front balcony of their centre in Southport and took off with some of the furniture.

We need to do more. The Southport Police Station, like so many, is stretched. It is very frustrating for officers when they go out on patrol: they apprehend young people, they take them to court and then sadly these kids just get off scot-free so the cycle continues. We need to see tougher laws. We certainly need to see greater intervention, and I take the earlier comment from the Minister for Children and Youth Justice. I am pleased that Southport will have a youth foyer to provide some long-term accommodation for some of these young people, but we need a lot more done in this space.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise in support of the amendment to the motion. We were here just over a month ago debating the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I supported this government's new youth justice laws. They are needed, particularly in Townsville. We have a serious problem up there and I supported those laws for the people of Townsville. I supported them because it is good government policy. The LNP supported them but they have come back in here a month later with some political stirring. The member for Burdekin in his contribution on the debate said that all levels of government need to work together. Can he pick up the phone and talk to the federal member who runs to Canberra—absolute coward—to say that we are not doing enough? We changed the laws and the LNP supported those laws. My stance on hardcore recidivist offenders remains unchanged.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim.

**Mr HARPER:** We need to hold them to account, lock them up and get them off the streets. These new laws target the hardcore 10 per cent recidivist youth offenders who commit around 50 per cent of the crimes.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** I will get to sentencing.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, I ask that you withdraw your unparliamentary comment.

**Mr Mander:** I withdraw.

**Mr HARPER:** Those laws were needed to crack down on that hardcore group of youth repeat offenders to keep our community safe. I was with Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler and the minister in Townsville recently, and he said that those new laws are producing promising results by keeping offenders in custody and bail being refused. They advise that, in the 25 days since the new laws have been targeting those recidivist young offenders, more than 50 juvenile offenders have been in custody and over half of them remain in custody right now. That is because of those new laws. I see more reports of that in the *Townsville Bulletin*. Bail is being refused because they are a serious risk to the community. That was passed last year—that serious offenders must not get bail. What we have done is built on that with this new suite of laws. I expect the courts to meet community expectations and hold those people to account. We have given them the legislation and the tools to do that.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr HARPER:** I want to talk about our hardworking police. We have more than 700 police based in Townsville, and I know why we have got 700. We called for more and we got it—thank you, Minister. We got 53 in the last term with 150 committed this term. I know that because I remember doing a ride-along shift at the RAP Hub that was a half-baked idea by the LNP with only 20 officers. They said to me, 'This is not working. We can't actually go out and do the job.' I said, 'What do you need—20 more officers?' I got them; thank you, Minister. I advocated for that and got them. I got a new station in the Upper Ross which now has 10 officers.


**Mr Crandon:** The minister didn't give them to you.

**Mr HARPER:** No, we worked very hard for those; we advocate for our community. Let's have a look in contrast at what the LNP did. They hid their crime stats. They had failed bail—they called it breach of bail, but 90 per cent reoffended. To come back in here a month after passing their laws—where was their fight then? That was an absolute failure. Then there were the boot camps, and the member for Scenic Rim got up and said it was a success. We still have the Auditor-General report that showed that 70 per cent of people in those boot camps reoffended. That is a fail, just like you failed on bail.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair.

**Mr HARPER:** They went to close the police academy. We kept it in Townsville's hands and the LNP sacked the police. I knew senior police who lost their job under the Newman government. Half of those people opposite were sitting around the cabinet table then. We back police; they sack police.

I will continue to advocate for my community to make sure that we hold serious offenders to account. We have the new legislation in place. We have enabled the judiciary to sentence. I will continue to work for my community.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.41 pm): It was really interesting to hear the minister speak about us on this side of the House feeding the fears. It was also interesting to observe and hear the member for Pine Rivers talk about the cheap political stunt in us moving this motion in the House and also to hear the member for Thuringowa to talk about the serious problem—at least he recognises there is a serious problem. However, I do not think we are feeding the fears of the people of Queensland or, in particular, the people of Townsville. We saw a rescue chopper being utilised to round up juvenile offenders. That rescue chopper is a resource that should not be utilised—

**Mr Harper:** Get to it! Get to it!

**Ms CAMM:** The member opposite is proud that they had to use so many rescue choppers. I take that interjection.

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Thuringowa, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms CAMM:** They should not use a rescue chopper to round up juveniles when police resources are already under enormous stress. I point to mentions in the media on 13 May about the relentless juvenile crime over two weeks in North Queensland. People in North Queensland are scared. People in the community are scared. They are scared to take their children to school when cars are racing at over 100 kilometres an hour in school communities. Back in February the Premier said, 'The loss of four innocent lives linked to a spate of senseless crime will not go unanswered.' Yet in the last month we have seen a significant increase across Townsville.

The member for Townsville and the member for Thuringowa talk about the need for the member for Burdekin to get on the phone. He is on the phone. He is on the phone to the constituents of Townsville and Thuringowa because when they call those electorate offices they do not receive the response they expect from their elected representatives. The member for Burdekin is pleased to stand up and advocate, and I am also pleased to stand up and continue to support him. We have seen that there is a targeted approach, and the police minister came out the day after the use of a chopper and said that all the legislative measures and the frontline strategies at their disposal would make a difference. We certainly hope it does.


I also want to highlight that across the community, particularly my local community of Whitsunday and Mackay, there are marginalised and at-risk children and young people who remain forgotten by this government. They are the victims of family violence and neglect who are sadly influenced by older offenders. Sadly, they do not have safe homes to go to and they are exposed to illicit drugs and alcohol. There are also those young people who are suffering with significant mental health challenges and a lack of support services in my community of the Whitsundays. We have now been waiting several years for increased funding for youth services.

I want to make special mention of Youth Space in Proserpine, the Whitsunday Neighbourhood Hub and also YIRS, the Youth Information Referral Service, who at different times have come together with concepts and ideas. They have put these ideas forward to state government departments and youth justice agencies in terms of early intervention, opportunities for respite on weekends and opportunities to work with young, at-risk people. However, there is no funding for these services. I ask the Minister for Youth Justice to engage with grassroots organisations who are ready to go. They are ready to go with volunteer support, but apparently we only support young people from the hours of nine to four; that is all the government funds.

**Mr Mander:** That is working well!

**Ms CAMM:** Exactly. I take that interjection from the member for Everton. It is not working well. It is failing young people in my community.

The government speaks of early intervention but we will see if there is a significant allocation of funding in the upcoming budget for early intervention programs. I certainly hope that that funding is not just allocated to South-East Queensland and the large population centres but recognises rural, regional and remote Queensland where we already see a deficiency in services that help support young people and families at their most important time.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.46 pm): I rise in support of the minister's amendment. I support this government's massive investment in community safety—a record \$2.6 billion in the police budget alone. That means more police for my electorate and more police resources. I commend this government for its record investment in police and police resources. There will be more than 2,000 extra police personnel over the next five years with at least 150 additional police to be delivered to the central police region, which includes my electorate of Keppel. I commend every one of the 550-plus police in the Capricornia police district and I say: thank you for keeping our communities safe.

This government backs our police. This government backs our police by providing the resources they need. Let's talk about community safety in the police district that takes in Keppel. The latest police statistics show that the overall rate of total reported crime from 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021 has decreased by 12 per cent. The rate of property offences decreased by 30 per cent over the same period. Those opposite do not like talking about the statistics. It is all just fear. Police themselves say early results show that the new youth justice laws are working. I know that police in the Capricornia district are out and about conducting regular bail and curfew checks on repeat youth offenders to ensure they are complying with their current court ordered conditions.

There is a youth justice co-responder team in the police district that covers my electorate of Keppel. This hardworking team of professionals operates on a three-shift, 24/7 roster targeting high-risk youth offenders. I commend each and every one of them for the work they do in keeping our community safe, and I support the programs that are in place to help turn young lives around.


This House has often heard me talk about the success of the award-winning Project Booyah. I fought for that project back in 2016 and, since then, I have attended graduation ceremony after graduation ceremony to celebrate young people turning their lives around. I back that program 100 per cent. I give a shout-out to Constable Joe Ramsay and his team at Project Booyah Rockhampton.

Project Respect, which was delivered by Project Booyah, works with young, at-risk people at the Yeppoon State High School. There is also a local Facebook page run by police for the Capricorn Coast. It is a direct link for police and the community to work together proactively on local solutions to local issues. We have 10 police liaison officers in the Capricornia District including Yeppoon.

This government is investing in community safety initiatives in my electorate. Under this government, police will have new high-tech cameras, including an expanded fleet of drones to crack down on hoons. We have expanded existing laws including shifting the onus of proof onto the vehicle owner. This means if the owner claims they were not driving the vehicle at the time of the offence it will be up to them to prove it. Our attack on hooning is fully funded from our record \$2.6 billion police budget.

The LNP axed funding to the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council that provides vital data to police to help prevent car thefts. The LNP also failed to fund a trial of automatic numberplate recognition that helps police track stolen vehicles. The LNP cut police numbers—more than 300 police personnel. They forced police to buy their own body worn video cameras. They failed to fund police training and police overtime for safe night precincts. They cut weapons training. They cut the police budget. It does not matter what they say in this House or outside it; they cut, sack and sell. It will always be in their DNA.

In closing, I take the time remaining to congratulate my Labor parliamentary colleagues the members for Townsville and Thuringowa. I know that these members live and breathe their Townsville community and that they have been having a really hard time. I know that they care deeply about their community and that they are working extremely hard to try to keep their community safe. We can see from the member for Thuringowa's contribution to this debate how passionate he is about working to keep his community safe. I congratulate the member for Thuringowa as I know that he puts his heart and soul into trying to keep his community safe. I thank him for the work he does to keep his community safe. He is so passionate about getting children into jobs or back into school or into skills and training and, most importantly, about community safety. I commend the minister's amendment to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (5.50 pm): Health, power, debt and crime: the Labor government has lost control of just about the whole suite of service delivery requirements in Queensland. Government members claim that there is some stunt. There is a genuine reflection of concern in the community about Labor's failure to deal with the incidence of youth crime. We see it day after day. Recently, for two weeks almost every night a car was stolen in Townsville and the criminals were running wild.

When it comes to protecting the community, the LNP will always outshine the Labor Party. I have spent the past 50 minutes listening to five members on the Labor side, not one of whom said, 'Our first obligation is to protect the members of the community—protect the innocent, protect their property and make sure they are safe and secure in their homes.' I heard the minister rattle off at least a dozen programs. What were those programs all about? They were all about the offenders. We just heard the member for Keppel. What did she say? She is proud to go to programs that are for offenders. Did any member opposite say, 'I visited the home of someone whose house was broken into, whose car was stolen, who had their bag snatched on the street, who was bashed, who was thumped, who was king hit, who was run over'? Not one of them did.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Logan is warned under the standing orders.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** This is a problem not just in Townsville; this is a problem across the state. It does not matter whether you are in Roma, Rockhampton, Surfers Paradise or Clayfield. Only last month the Brisbane Airport Corporation conducted a survey of residents of Brisbane. The top three issues in the community were (1) crime; (2) traffic congestion—Labor has lost control of that as well and (3) safety and security. These were the top three matters of concern to people in Brisbane, according to the BAC survey.


Labor has lost control and is either wilfully ignorant or completely and utterly incompetent. We heard them list the so-called failures. The member for Thuringowa talked about the boot camp. How does the member for Thuringowa explain an 85 per cent reoffending rate from Labor's \$30 million bail house program, which they then spent another half a million dollars reviewing to find out it did not work? Then they sat on the report until after an election before coming clean and saying that it was another failure.

We heard the minister talk about half a billion dollars being spent on the youth justice system, \$150 million of which is going into building 30 rooms at a West Moreton correctional centre. That is \$150 million for 30 rooms. Can members believe it? Another \$30 million went into the failed youth bail house scheme. When it comes to spending money, this government has no peer. When it comes to protecting the community and getting results, this government has no standing. It is completely and utterly at sea.

Then we heard claims about breach of bail and the effectiveness of the LNP's laws. This will burn them, but the fact of the matter is that according to the Childrens Court annual report for 2014-15 the incidence of youth crime fell by five per cent. Judge Shanahan filed that report. The report states—

... there was a 8.7% cent decrease from the previous year. The trend line in relation to the ten year comparison of the number of charges against juvenile defendants continues to rise, although in 2014-15 there was a 4.9% cent decrease from the previous year.

There was an almost five per cent decrease in charges dealt with in the Childrens Court, as reported by Judge Shanahan. There is so much I can say. Yes, we supported the government's changes to the laws. We said that we would. We said that we would act in a bipartisan way. We understand that it is 340 repeat, recidivist offenders. We are not suggesting the other 80 per cent who never go on to reoffend should be done for breach of bail, but those 340 who continually commit those offences and who turn up time and time again should be done for breach of bail, as we announced. This government has lost control; the LNP will get it back.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.55 pm): I rise to support the amendment to the motion. Firstly, we have heard a number of stories about people affected by crime. No-one wants to see people affected by crime. We all are on the same page when it comes to wanting a safer community. That is why we continue to work very hard to ensure that we reduce criminal offending, to build and enhance community safety. We will never give up when it comes to acting against criminal offending.

As we heard from the Premier this morning, this government is making a significant investment in community safety. We are investing in jobs that support community safety, with a record boost in policing and in community safety. We made a commitment around delivering an extra 2,025 police

personnel to boost the capacity of the Queensland Police Service to enhance community safety. We are already delivering on that commitment. We have people at the academy right now training to become police officers to serve their community.

It is important to compare that commitment to the commitment of those opposite at the last election. When we compare those two commitments, we see that if the LNP had been elected there would be 600 fewer police in Queensland. What does that mean right across the state? In places like Cairns and the Far North, there would be 90 fewer police. In places like Townsville and the north, there would be another 90 fewer police. In places like Mackay, Rockhampton and Central Queensland, there would be 125 fewer police under the LNP. On the Fraser Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay, there would be 150 fewer police if the LNP had been elected. In Brisbane there would be 130 fewer police. On the Gold Coast and in Logan, there would be 60 fewer police. Out in Toowoomba, Ipswich and the south-west, there would be 150 fewer police if the LNP had been elected. If they had been elected, the cuts would have been not just to the Police Service but extended further into other community safety agencies like the firefighters. We promised an extra 357 firefighters. What did they promise? Zero, zip, zilch. What about corrective services? It would have been a negative number, because they promised to privatise prisons. This would have delivered fewer custodial officers for Queensland.

When it comes to delivering for our emergency services, police and community safety, this government is proud to back its record. When it comes to supporting those agencies, we back them 100 per cent. We will outshine the LNP every single time.

We are hearing from police that our law changes last month are starting to have an effect. Police are saying that more young people are being remanded more often. We will continue to monitor that. We have always said that we will continue to monitor what happens.

It is interesting to note that this builds on the downward trajectory that we are seeing when it comes to the number of unique young offenders. It is the lowest on record in 10 years and down 30 per cent. Year-on-year data shows that the number of juvenile offenders by offence from 1 January to the end of April for offences against the person is down five per cent statewide—this is juvenile offenders—and for offences against property it is down 25 per cent. I note the five per cent that the member for Clayfield referenced and see him 25 per cent. Other offences are down 16 per cent and overall offences are down 20 per cent year on year.

We are investing in early interventions, we are investing in the preventions, we are investing in police and community safety to give them the capacity to respond and apprehend offenders who are committing crimes, and we are also tightening laws to ensure that those people who seek to inflict the most harm on our community are in detention more often. That is the intention of this government.

We are also giving the courts extra powers to take stronger action. We provided the courts with the power to trial electronic monitoring devices on a cohort of youth offenders to provide the courts with an extra suite of options. We have also provided police with additional powers in safe night precincts around wandering and police are saying that that has been effective. It is only four weeks in, but it is very effective and we look forward to seeing that trial through.

*(Time expired)*

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 48**—Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**Ind, 1**—Bolton.

**NOES, 34:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

Pairs: Bailey, Janetzki; Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The bells will ring for one minute.

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 48**—Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**Ind, 1**—Bolton.

**NOES, 34:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

Pairs: Bailey, Janetzki; Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

This House:


1. acknowledges the Palaszczuk government's record investment and measures to support community safety in Queensland; and
2. notes the recent legislative amendments to strengthen community safety laws in Queensland were supported by the LNP.

## DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1656, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (6.09 pm), continuing: The Palaszczuk government will make sensible, prudent savings—savings that will ensure we can continue to invest in the needs of the public in health, education, transport, roads and our national parks, which alone generate \$2.6 billion for our economy and indirectly support 17,000 jobs across our state.

Under the Palaszczuk government we are creating jobs in new industries. Our investment in the popular container refund scheme has already created more than 700 jobs across the state and put \$400 million back into the pockets of families, community groups and charities. The establishment of the renewable energy zones and Queensland's first publicly owned renewable energy company, CleanCo, will make sure that Queensland leads the way in jobs for the energy sector while also achieving our 50 per cent renewable energy target.


We know how those opposite feel about public ownership. We have heard a number of LNP MPs during this debate complain about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund because it means they cannot sell off the Titles Registry. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership and they will not be able to sell it, and they of course do not like this idea. Unlike those opposite, this government understands that Queenslanders want jobs and they want a government with a plan for economic recovery. They do not want cuts, they do not want to lose their jobs and they do not want public assets sold. That is what they said in 2015 and in 2017 and they said it again in 2020.

It has been interesting to hear some of those opposite make contributions around debt in this state while at the same time complaining about election commitments like the satellite hospital and other investments in health care when those opposite went to the election with no plan when it came to health care.

In fact, when it came to health care on the Gold Coast their plan was to deliver no additional services, no additional mental health expansion at the Gold Coast University Hospital and no plan for a satellite hospital. If those opposite had been elected we would not have seen any of this important infrastructure investment to deliver the sort of health care that a growing city like the Gold Coast needs.

It is a bit rich for those opposite to talk about debt, saying they want more in health but at the same time not actually committing to any of those critical investments in health. We will continue to back Queenslanders with this bill by delivering sensible debt reduction and savings while investing in frontline services, infrastructure investment and protecting our environment. I commend the bill to the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): I remind the House of those members on warnings. The member for Gregory has left. The members for Logan, Maryborough, Ninderry, Chatsworth, Buderim and Thuringowa are all under warnings for the rest of the evening.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.12 pm): I am sure I will give no-one reason to interject during this speech. I would like to start by rebutting some of the statements made by the member for Clayfield, who is normally an august speaker that I take the time to listen to. I was somewhat disappointed tonight. He started off with an attack on the member for Maryborough. That was not the bit that disappointed me. That is to be expected. On occasion we attack each other here. It is below his oratorical skills, but it was not unexpected.

My point of disappointment with the member for Clayfield comes from the fact that on many occasions in this House I have made the appeal to the LNP speechwriters to please give us an A and a B version of the speech. All we hear over and over again is the A version. I will go further and throw that request out. All I want is an A and a B version of the humorous opening one-liner that we have heard on at least 30 occasions tonight. One can tell the comedians from the parliamentarians. One can pick the people who have comedic timing in the delivery of that very funny one-liner that has been delivered 30 times, exactly the same, over and over again, and it is nobody on the LNP side of the House.

I also take issue with the member for Clayfield's swipe at the assistant ministers. I went away and did a bit of research around the assistant ministers of the LNP. Not only did they have more of them; I think we should think about some of the eminently qualified assistant ministers. We had the renowned digital native, the member for Mermaid Beach, who was the assistant minister to the premier for e-government.

**A government member:** The chicken dance!

**Mr KELLY:** No, he was not an assistant minister for dancing, that is for sure. I will move on to talk about this bill, but like many other people in the debate I am going to delve into history. I am going to go a bit further back than the Newman government. I am going to talk about a man named Aristotle. Aristotle said, which I think is germane and relevant to this debate, that we are what we repeatedly do. That was very true when he said it a couple of thousand years ago and it remains very true in this debate.

This bill continues to do what Labor governments repeatedly do. At its core this bill is about responsible economic management. That is what Labor governments repeatedly do. Yes, member for Theodore, shake your head. You do not like it when you hear the truth. Labor governments repeatedly stick up for workers, create jobs, back small businesses, invest in infrastructure and undertake major social reform. That is what Labor governments repeatedly do.

I will tell members what else we repeatedly do: we repeatedly are honest with the people of Queensland. In 2020 our state faced some difficult economic times. We were honest with the people of Queensland about what it would take to keep Queenslanders safe and lead the recovery. This bill underpins that COVID recovery we are working on. It will enable the government to lead the community in our COVID recovery by investing in schools, public transport and sporting facilities. I am seeing that happen in my electorate.

**Ms Grace:** Hear, hear!

**Mr KELLY:** I thank the Minister for Education. It will allow us to back small businesses, like VMP and Variety Living in Greenslopes, so they continue to remain viable. We will continue to recharge the workforce through investing in skilling and training Queenslanders, just like we have done with free apprenticeships, TAFE and Skilling Queenslanders for Work. Vision Australia is taking people who have been unemployed for a long period of time and helping them to get back into the workforce through Skilling Queenslanders for Work. We have expanded our economic activity. We can do that as responsible economic managers. We have invested in the film and television industry. A film and television veteran came to see me the other day and he said he has never had so much work in his career. We are all about targeted assistance, particularly in the tourism industry.



As Aristotle said, we are what we repeatedly do. Let us look at what the LNP repeatedly do. Let us start with sacking. I was at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital when Campbell Newman was elected and the number crunchers, the clipboard carriers, came in. Did they come in with a good management plan? No, they simply came with a set of numbers and started slashing and burning. There was no thinking about what they were doing. I was in the rehab unit and the first team they slashed was the stroke outreach team. What did that team do? It helped Queenslanders from regional, rural and remote areas get back into their communities.

I do not think we should ever forget that amongst all of the cuts and all of the sackings that occurred, those opposite sacked all of the people who we have re-employed and who are keeping us safe during COVID. All of those workers were sacked and walked out the door under the Newman government. Previous health ministers and the current Minister for Health have continued the good work of rebuilding that section of Queensland Health.

When it comes to repeatedly doing something, the LNP are past masters of cutting. There was \$120 million ripped out of community groups in the health sector. The carnage was immense and we are still rebuilding. Those opposite did not want those pesky groups that would stand up and advocate on behalf of the health of Queenslanders. The LNP love to come in here and talk about crime—in particular, youth crime—but let us look at what they cut. They cut \$291,000 from the Triple P—Positive Parenting Program. Act for Kids had \$470,000 axed from its funding. Those opposite also cut \$240,000 from foster care. Every politician loves babies, but those opposite do not even like babies because they axed \$130,000 from Ready Readers Books for Bubs. When an LNP member was a board member, they axed \$64,000 worth of funding from Bravehearts.

Turning to my electorate, I have spoken about Vision Australia. They took \$200,000 away from that organisation, which supports people with visual impairment. The Brisbane Youth Service was not spared the rod either; they lost \$170,000. I get it when the LNP gets rid of funding for the arts and things such as the tenancy advisory service, because they do not like them and they certainly do not like Sisters Inside; however, I am really perplexed about some of the other cuts that went on.

The LNP cut assistance from small business. They cut \$2.6 million from small business training programs and \$14 million from business development grants. They are supposedly the champions of small business, but they were out there cutting and slashing small business funding. But wait, there's more. They cut funding to the biosecurity lab in North Queensland. They are supposed to like farmers, but the real farmers' friend is sitting over here. We all know that. The LNP slashed \$8 million from the biosecurity lab in North Queensland and they have the hide to lecture us on invasive weeds. I have read that list of cuts and I could keep going, but I have only one minute and 54 seconds left. If I was to put this into a song, instead of singing 'I've been everywhere, man' I would be singing 'I've cut everything, man'. I am not even going to get on to—


**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Mudgeeraba!

**Mr KELLY:** Aristotle got it slightly wrong when he said that we are what we repeatedly do. If he had come to Greenslopes between 2012 and 2015, he would have seen what the LNP repeatedly did not do. I can tell the House what they did not do in the electorate of Greenslopes and pretty much everywhere else. They did not build a thing. They did not build a school or any public housing. They did not invest in any public transport. The only thing they built was a large tower for themselves in the middle of Brisbane, and they have the hide to come in here and lecture us about regional Queensland. They did announce one thing in Greenslopes. They announced a hall for Cavendish Road State High School, but poor old Ian Kaye could not get the hall built because Campbell Newman took the funding and gave it to The Gap State High School.

They are what they repeatedly do: they cut, they sack, they sell. Aristotle was right after all: they are what they repeatedly do. He was right about Labor as well because we are what we repeatedly do. We are repeatedly responsible economic managers. We repeatedly keep Queenslanders safe. We repeatedly lead the economy. We repeatedly stick up for workers and jobs. We are what we repeatedly do and we are proud of what we repeatedly do. We are responsible economic managers, we create jobs and we are leading the recovery. I commend the bill to the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, I appreciate that that was a bit provocative but you were borderline unruly. Consider this your caution. I ask you to stop interjecting.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (6.22 pm): It is a pleasure to follow my colleague the member for Greenslopes. I will continue in the same vein in which he delivered his speech. This bill is an important part of the measures that make up the superior economic performance of this side of the House. In speaking about our performance the Treasurer mentioned three indicators: in 2020 state final demand was up by 2.4 per cent, which is double that of Western Australia; Queensland had the largest employment growth of any state, up 2.1 per cent since March 2020; and in 2020 our household consumption was up 2.6 per cent, having gone down by 2.7 per cent across Australia. In relation to this bill, that shows that during the pandemic we have kept Queensland safe through our health response and our economic management.

During the pandemic we have invested \$11 billion into our economy. That includes \$1.2 billion to support the health system, \$1 billion for payroll tax relief and other small business relief, \$1 billion for job support loans, \$400 million in household utility bill relief and \$200 million in business adaptation grants, and there were no increased taxes or savage cuts to services. That shows the difference between ourselves and the LNP.

As the Treasurer said, our credit rating is the strongest of any state according to Standard & Poor's. We can compare that to Victoria and New South Wales where they face credit rating downgrades and the Commonwealth government is on negative watch. We have borrowed to keep Queensland afloat and this bill is part of our plan to manage that debt. I have no doubt that the measures in this bill will improve the net debt position of our state and reduce our debt burden.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** I hear the squawks from members on the other side. We have heard them say how superior they are, but what is their plan on debt? At a federal level they have no plan. As the Treasurer said, there will be 10 years of deficit, stretching on into the never-never, with no plan to fix it. In fact, before we even entered the pandemic they had doubled the debt and now it will be over \$1 trillion. What is worse, they have no plan for investment in long-term economic structures. For example, at their first chance to invest in a renewable energy future they tried to axe a project. They tried to stop the Kaban wind farm project from accessing a NAIF loan. They tried to stop a project that will create 250 jobs yet they promised to fund an alternative energy project in the Hunter Valley that will generate 10 jobs. That sums up where the LNP is on economic structures and how it does not use debt to create a viable future for us.

As we have heard from many speakers throughout this debate, the LNP's plan is the same as usual: cut, sack and sell. As the Treasurer said, when they came to government in 2012 one of the first things they did was cut \$500 million from stamp duty, and that was before they even got to their first budget. During this debate the member for Southport made a comment that illustrates the cut, sack and sell mentality we see from those opposite. He said that Labor squanders finances by inflating the Public Service. That is right: we squander funds by employing more doctors, more teachers, more teacher aides, more nurses, more paramedics and ambulance drivers, and more prison guards.

That brings me to the contribution of the member for Caloundra, which amply demonstrated the effect of the LNP plan on debt. He told us how he stood with staff from a correctional centre as they received their white slips. They were given notice that they were done; that their employment was finished. That horrific story illustrates the alternative approach of those opposite.

We know that, as opposed to inflating the public sector, the LNP deflated the public sector. We know the figures: 4,400 workers went from Queensland health, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. That included 731 nurses and midwives from the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, which services the Caboolture Hospital and the Redcliffe Hospital in my area.

As we examine this bill it is very clear that the LNP has no plan for debt except to cut, sack and sell. Selling was one of the things that they did specifically during the previous government. In this debate the member for Everton said, 'We did not sell one single asset.' I am going to read from an *Australian Financial Review* article dated October 2014.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr WHITING:** The 2014 article states—

The Queensland government has sold more than \$10 billion in public assets since elected in 2012, despite claiming it would wait for a privatisation mandate at next year's election.

Treasurer Tim Nicholls vowed in opposition not to undertake a large sale of government property, but more than \$820 million worth of buildings and land has been sold in the Liberal National Party government's first term in office.


I will go through some of those things. Total assets sold were valued at \$10.7 billion: Queensland Motorways sold for \$1.7 billion in April 2014; a sell-down in rail operator Aurizon worth \$2.3 billion, including a \$860 million stake in March 2013 and \$1.5 billion in November 2012; a stake in South Australian electricity supplier Electranet to a Chinese company worth \$500 million in November 2012; the sale of seven office buildings worth \$562 billion in April 2013; the sale of the Supreme Court and District Court site worth \$63 million in March 2013; the sale of South Brisbane TAFE to Metro Property Group worth \$22 million in 2013; and the list goes on. Would the member for Everton care to explain whether this article is correct and whether they did sell these assets during the first term of the Campbell Newman government?

It is very clear that we have a plan to reduce debt. The LNP have no plan to reduce debt except to cut, sack and sell. In fact, I would say that the LNP have abandoned the field when it comes to economic management. They are leaving it to us because they know that we can do it better.

We have heard nothing from them this term about their financial or economic plans. All they want to do is fight culture wars, chase ambulances and appeal to their base. That is the summation of what they are trying to do at this point. They think there are no votes in sensible economic management—the kind of economic management that we do on this side: economic management that produces secure jobs for working people, pays for schools for our kids and funds the hospitals that look after us when we are not well. They have abandoned the field of managing the economy. That sounds a death knell for them because, as we know, half of their votes came from people who thought they were better economic managers.

Those opposite have talked about the value of the Titles Registry. It is so disappointing to see that the LNP have been keen to talk down the value of this public asset. I surmise that part of the reason they have done that is that they would love to sell this if they ever got the chance. They would love to see it privatised, as in New South Wales and Victoria. In Victoria and New South Wales, when they were sold they were valued up to \$1.5 billion less than their true value. An asset with its value pushed down below its market value is very attractive to mates who have streams of gold. The member for Mermaid Beach said that market forces should determine value. In the cases of New South Wales and Victoria, market forces arrived at a value for those assets at \$1.5 billion above the sale price.

We have a comprehensive plan on debt. It is very clear from what we have seen today that the LNP have no plan.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (6.32 pm): How nice has it been over the last two days to listen to the shattering of the glass jaws on the other side? Here is the new LNP: fewer in numbers, fewer in ideas and weaker in resolve.

I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This bill allows for savings measures, ensuring we can continue to invest strongly in our frontline services. This is important because, firstly, it is the right thing for governments to do. It is the right thing for governments to provide the staffing and infrastructure that services the health and wellbeing of our state, our regions, our communities and our towns. Every Queenslander has the right to access equal opportunities to health, education, safety and wellbeing.

How do we do that in Queensland? It is easy. We Queenslanders back in governments that grow and support frontline services—governments such as the Palaszczuk Labor government. When a government that is elected proceeds to unleash the most savage attack on public servants and frontline workers, we Queenslanders vote them out. That is what we do. When conservative governments take the jobs of ordinary, everyday mums and dads, when they target the workers who bravely put their life on the line, we rally together and we vote them out. Queenslanders, over the last 30 years and today, want a government that ensures responsible saving measures in order to fund frontline services and provides for friends and families in our communities.

This bill is about making the necessary amendments to maintain the financial responsibility of the Palaszczuk government's strong economic recovery plan—a strong economic recovery plan that was brought about by the strong health response to COVID-19, a strong health response that was underpinned by the investment in the Queensland health system which this bill enables the government to continue to do.

In his explanatory speech the Treasurer spoke about how this bill will assist in the delivery of 5,800 nurses and midwives. What a great investment that is, especially during the time of a major global pandemic. What I cannot understand is why those opposite continue to want to rip away at health. Can you imagine an LNP perfect storm in 2021? We would have even fewer nurses in our hospitals. They would have marched even more nurses out of our hospitals. Then, after they had marched even more

health workers on the front line out of our hospitals, they would have opened up the borders. They would have opened up the borders and allowed COVID-19 to run rampant throughout our state and rampant throughout our hospitals. That would be the perfect LNP storm.

This bill allows for the debate of fundamental differences held between members of the government, on this side of the House, and those of the mismatched grouping of conservatives lumped together in an unfriendly and unhealthy coalition. This bill has scope for a responsible form of debt reduction that grows the front line and protects the jobs of Queenslanders.

Let's speak about protecting jobs. The member for Hervey Bay spoke about the 'boxmen', a term that was whispered around the corridors of public sector offices under the brutal and heartless reign of the Newman government. On the other side of the chamber we have the party of the bagmen to the boxmen. That is the history of conservative governments in this state—from the bagmen to the boxmen. Sacking frontline workers is not the right way to reduce debt. Marching 4,400 health workers out the doors of hospitals is not the right way to reduce debt. Attempting to cut funding to schools and sacking teacher aides every single time those opposite get into government is not the right way to reduce debt. Having public sector workers whispering in fear about the boxmen is not responsible government and that is not how governments should aim to reduce debt.

We know that when it comes to frontline jobs, the LNP themselves carry a big box. In fact, they love a big box. We know that the member for Clayfield had a big box ready for 14,000 Queensland workers. When Queenslanders got their chance in 2017, they voted him out. Let me tell you, the LNP had a nice box for him, too—a nice box to put all his gear in after clearing his desk—because they sack Queenslanders and then they sack themselves.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. Please, if you could direct this member back to the long title of the bill that is before the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Order! Member for Bundaberg, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SMITH:** Yes, absolutely I will. Thank you for your guidance. I mention Surfers Paradise, Clayfield and Nanango. The former member for Broadwater's box was delivered all the way from Mundingburra.

I return to the bill by quoting the Treasurer's explanatory speech where he said that 'this bill aims to lock in a range of saving measures'. I wonder what measures the member for Broadwater has to save himself from the coup being whispered around the boxmen of the backbench. There is a reason Joh built the annexe with very thin walls. When you go around the right corridors, you might just find out why. In his speech the Treasurer said—

This bill aims to lock in a range of saving measures identified in the plan that underpin the government's unite and recover priorities.

One of those priorities is building essential infrastructure—essential infrastructure like the new Bundaberg Hospital. Queensland's Premier came to Bundaberg last year—the Premier who was in her second term then and now her third term; well done Premier—and announced the location for the new world-class Bundaberg Hospital that will service the Wide Bay. One would think that when the Premier came up to announce where the new hospital was going to go that the LNP would back that. One would think that they would want to show some credibility when it comes to health. Instead, what we had was the LNP come out in the media—in the papers and on television and radio—asking for a delay in the decision around the location of new Bundaberg Hospital. That did not fill Queenslanders with confidence. That did not fill the people of Bundaberg with confidence. We all know that when it comes to savings measures and the LNP it means an attack on health in Queensland.

Whilst on the matter of constructing vital infrastructure, what a great time to review the bill's intention to repeal the Building Queensland Act 2015 and integrate Building Queensland's functions, staff, assets and resources into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The resulting outcomes of such an enactment will see agencies take the lead role when developing business cases and, as the Treasurer mentioned, apply a best practice business case development framework to new infrastructure projects.

The people in my electorate are well aware of the importance of delivering new infrastructure projects. This bill will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of government infrastructure and planning. The people of Bundaberg also know that the LNP will not call upon their federal mates to back in the Bundaberg East flood levee. There is a business case there. It has been locked away in a cabinet in Canberra for the last couple of months and they will not look at it. They will not stand up for Queenslanders.

Meanwhile, the Palaszczuk Labor government, which is investing in infrastructure and investing in jobs, has \$42.5 million on the table ready to go. It is ready to lock in a project that will create just under 700 jobs. It is ready to build a project that will protect over 600 buildings, protect schools, protect community groups and protect families. Instead of calling on their mates they resort to immature tactics.


**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock! Member for Nanango, I caution you. Please cease all interjections.

**Mr SMITH:** Instead of calling on their federal colleagues to fund their fair share to protect people's lives and livelihoods, protect schools and protect community groups, those opposite put more energy into immature amendments. They are seeking to change the name of a bill that they are going to vote down. That is their best strategy. That is the best thing they have.

They cannot apologise to nurses, they cannot apologise to teachers and they cannot apologise to teacher aides. Instead, they go to the schoolyard. They remind me of the kids I had to teach on the one day I taught a prep class. That is the best we have on the other side. We have the equivalent of a prep class over there. The school captain is right down there. How about standing up for Queenslanders? How about forming a policy that brings about savings measures without sacking nurses and midwives, without picking fights with doctors and teachers, without cutting funding and without sacking our teacher aides?

The Palaszczuk government is continuing to deliver a strong economic recovery plan for all of Queensland. I will be giving this bill my support. I will always back in our public sector workers because we love them in Bundy. We love public servants.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.43 pm): The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 was introduced by Cameron Dick MP, Treasurer and Minister for Investment, on 20 March 2021. I rise to speak in support of the bill. After its tabling, the bill was referred to the parliamentary Economics and Governance Committee.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr MADDEN:** Thank you. I take that interjection. In its report No. 8 of the 57th Parliament, which the Economics and Governance Committee tabled in May 2021, the committee made only one recommendation, and that was that the bill be passed. As outlined in the explanatory notes, the objectives of the bill are to: support the state's contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund established under the Queensland Future Fund Act 2020; introduce a fee unit model to streamline the annual process of indexing regulatory fees; abolish Building Queensland, BQ, and the BQ board and integrate BQ's staff, assets, records, resources and liability into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; change the governance structure of the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland; repeal the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 so that machinery-of-government changes may reintegrated the Public Safety Business Agency into public safety entities; abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission and integrate its functions into the Queensland—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Pause the clock! I remind members on both sides to please cease interjecting across the chamber.

**Mr MADDEN:** The other objectives are to: abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission and integrate its functions into Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Competition Authority; mandate that legislation that requires or authorises print advertising or publication by government agencies shall be satisfied by digital/electronic advertising or publication, subject to appropriate exemptions; and make technical amendments to the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 to clarify head of power issues and improve the operation of proposed regulations.

On 7 September 2020, as part of the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, the Queensland government affirmed its commitment to implement a savings and debt plan intended to deliver \$3 billion in budgetary savings over the four-year period from 2020-21 to 2023-24 to support Queensland's economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19. Key aspects of this plan include: the establishment of a new special purpose investment fund, the Queensland Future Fund, to help pay down government debt; and a commitment to undertake a number of reviews of whole-of-government resources and agency functions to ensure funds are effectively utilised and directed to where they are needed most.

The legislative framework for creating and administering the Queensland Future Fund was already in place at the time, having been established in the August 2020 enactment of the Queensland Future Fund Act, which also instituted a sub fund in the Debt Retirement Fund. The government undertook to formally give effect to the Debt Retirement Fund by contributing assets, including those associated with the titles office and other investments to seed the fund by 30 June 2021.

One aspect of the bill that is of concern to me is the removal of the print requirement to inform Queenslanders of certain actions. Under the existing legislation, the Queensland government has legislated requirements to inform Queenslanders of certain actions it has taken or is contemplating via print advertising or publication. Public notification supports government transparency and accountability, informing not only the individual or entity directly affected but also the general public. The purpose of these notices is to enable citizens to make well-informed decisions and provide the opportunity for the public to influence governing bodies and allow the public to be active participation in the democratic process.


Not all of my constituents are computer savvy and many are reliant on the various hardcopy newspapers in my electorate of Ipswich West to keep up to date with local events and activities. Newspapers remain a strong presence in regional and rural Queensland, with established independent papers and at least 24 new titles starting in Queensland in the last 12 months. In my electorate of Ipswich West we have a number of weekly publications that include the *Moreton Border News*, the *Independent*, the *Somerset* as well as the *Fassifern Guardian and Tribune*. They will all suffer because of the change to the print requirement for public notices.

The *Fassifern Guardian & Tribune* has been publishing for over 120 years. In the past year it expanded to cover the Ipswich region and has employed more journalists and launched a weekend newspaper. The staff of the *Fassifern Guardian & Tribune* have advised me that, if there is no requirement to publish public notices in the paper, the onus will then fall back on the public to look up the government notice page online on a regular basis to check whether there are pending development applications in their area.

The public will need to be dedicated in checking development application portals as journalists currently are, but it is unlikely the general population will be so diligent. Before they know what is going on, it may well be too late for them to lodge objections to a proposal. Public notices in the paper may only reach 10 or 20 per cent of the population, but these people are usually engaged with activities in our community and are likely to share what they read in the paper with a number of people.

This bill proposes to amend the Financial Accountability Act 2009 to insert a new part 5A to mandate that, subject to certain exemptions, the print requirement must be met by online advertising or publication either on a government website, in an online version of a newspaper or on a different website, if appropriate, rather than in a printed newspaper. I think this is a backward step.

In closing, I would like to thank the Treasurer for tabling this important bill; the Economics and Governance Committee, chaired by the member for Logan, Linus Power, for his careful scrutiny of the bill; the committee secretariat; the submitters; and Hansard. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.51 pm): It is a pleasure to rise this evening to support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. I am left through the course of this debate to wonder whether there is anything that those opposite could derive any source of happiness from, because time after time we are struggling to see any happiness coming from those opposite. You would think that when we are talking about debt reduction and savings—the very thing that those opposite bang on about at every given opportunity in their economic jargon—they would be pleased to see a bill such as this come before the House. In fact, we have not—

**Mr Bleijie:** How much is the debt reduced by?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Member for Kawana, please cease all interjections.

**Ms BOYD:** I hear the interjections from the member for Kawana—the very member who stands up in this chamber most Tuesdays of a sitting week and debates a business motion about how members—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you have been warned. I will now ask you to leave the chamber.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 6.52 pm.*

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you were cautioned, I ask you to cease all interjections.

**Ms BOYD:** We come into this place most Tuesdays to debate the business motion and those opposite—namely, the member for Kawana—will tell us how unhappy they are with designated time frames for bills. They tell us how critical they are of government that they all do not have an opportunity to speak on behalf of their communities—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. The member for Nanango was not formally warned under the standing orders, so she is allowed back in the chamber. Member for Nanango, welcome back. Now you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Pine Rivers, you have the call.

**Ms BOYD:** Perhaps someone should start the stopwatch on that one. They come in here and they argue sitting week after sitting week about how opposition members need more opportunity to speak on bills, yet this evening we find ourselves here in this very strange predicament where opposition members are not taking any opportunity to speak on behalf of their communities on this very important legislation. One is left to wonder if it is just filibustering from the member for Kawana each time we debate the business motion here in the House.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I fail to see how the Business Committee motion debate, of which we have not had for three sitting weeks, is relevant to the debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. We have not had a Business Committee motion debate because there is nothing on the *Notice Paper* to debate, but I do not think it is relevant to the bill.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Pine Rivers, could you please come back to the long title of the bill?

**Ms BOYD:** Certainly, Madam Deputy Speaker. The point I was getting to is: reflecting on the debate this bill, I am certainly left to wonder whether the opposition have already run out of puff. Certainly that would seem to be the case. I think this bill on debt reduction and savings is particularly perplexing to those opposite. They have been stumped on a number of questions including: why are we finding efficiencies rather than cutting and how is it that we are making savings without cutting workers? I do not think that those opposite can get their head around those two points.

We have seen from their record in government that the LNP hate sensible savings. We know that they simply cannot do it. When we have a look at the track record of the LNP, we have seen 14,000 Queensland workers sacked—4,400 of those were health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I hear the groans and the complaints of those opposite. They do not like their record. Certainly they would be keen to walk away from it. The contributions of those opposite so far in this debate have been about returning a AAA credit rating and what the LNP would do in government.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member on her feet has the call. Can we please let her speak?

**Ms BOYD:** I thought I would have more time to research my contribution than I did given that members opposite are no longer talking on this bill and no longer making any contribution and are allowing all the government members to take up the speaking spots. I started some googling, as one does—

**Opposition members:** Googling!

**Ms BOYD:** Googling—yes, absolutely. It is a search engine on the interweb. I suggest members opposite check it out. I came across an interesting read in the *Brisbane Times*—‘LNP unanimously endorses 99-year asset lease plan’. The article talked about how the LNP MPs were called back to Brisbane on Tuesday to vote on the plan. Then premier Mr Newman said that the plan was unanimously endorsed, to every ‘last man and woman’, by the LNP party room.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I hear the interjections—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Member for Glass House, you are now warned.

**Ms BOYD:** They talked about how the assets would be leased so they were able to deal with Labor's debt; how they would create up to 25,000 new jobs—despite the fact that they had just put 14,000 people out of work; how they would deliver \$8.6 billion worth of infrastructure—despite the fact their only infrastructure legacy is the 'tower of power' at 1 William Street; and how they would provide \$3.4 billion worth of cost-of-living relief.

What we saw through the asset sell-off plan was that energy assets were included. We know that power prices only go one way when they are privatised, and that is up. This article also talks about how then treasurer Tim Nicholls, the member for Clayfield, travelled 20,000 kilometres around the state while consulting on the plan, so it is little wonder that the member for Clayfield was so salty during this debate. He is that salty that when the sun comes up tomorrow we should roll him out the front and start mining salt from him.


**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I take that interjection from the member for Maryborough. He is even criticising the member for Maryborough's footwear.

Debate, on motion of Ms Boyd, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### National Palliative Care Week

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.00 pm): Today I join with the Speaker to mention that it is National Palliative Care Week. Running from 23 to 29 May, this week is Palliative Care Queensland's showcase of the positive impacts that excellent palliative care has on vulnerable Queenslanders across the state. The theme of the week is 'Palliative care: It's more than you think'. Going beyond the treatment of physical pain, it identifies and treats symptoms that may be physical, emotional, spiritual or social.


This week we honour all of those doctors, nurses and allied health workers who are working to ease the suffering of seriously ill fellow Queenslanders. The not-for-profit churches and other religious groups also play a substantial role. Can I commend the Uniting Church and Catholic Health Australia, among others, for the health care they provide to the elderly and sick. For example, Catholic Health Australia provides one in five hospital and aged care beds. Then there are paediatric palliative care services like those provided by the wonderful Hummingbird House.

The provision of excellent care is critical to people having confidence in the system to look after them near the end. I have seen firsthand the difference that timely and high-quality palliative care can make to ease suffering. It is, however, inexcusable when the sick suffer from a lack of such care. Sadly, for over three decades Labor state governments in Queensland have not kept pace with the palliative care needs of the terminally ill. This week PCQ and the AMAQ said that Queensland government funding of palliative care falls well short of what is needed to deliver adequate care. PCQ said that access is 'very much a lottery' and many providers are being forced to close. Those living outside South-East Queensland often have to do without palliative care at all. Karuna Hospice Services say their in-home palliative care service always has a waiting list.

Palliative Care Queensland says that \$121 million more per annum is needed. The government says they are investing \$171 million more into palliative care, but that is over six years so only \$28.5 million more per annum, or \$5.70 per Queenslanders per day, is invested—way below the \$121 million required. Secondly, some funds in that new figure may be diverted to other purposes. In the answer to my question on notice 1143 the health minister stated, 'This funding will support a new statewide palliative care and end-of-life care strategy.' The minister should fess up. How much might be siphoned off from the palliative care budget to pay for the government's other end-of-life strategies?

I call on the government to follow the New South Wales LNP government with a large additional investment in palliative care and do it now, in National Palliative Care Week, or at the very least in the June budget, to demonstrate that they really do care about the terminally ill.

### Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.03 pm): During this month Queensland marks Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month to increase community awareness of domestic and family violence and to promote partnerships and collaborations across the community to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence.




Domestic and family violence knows no barriers. It affects every part of our community and does not discriminate against age, gender, cultural identity, income level, education level, faith or social or relationship status. It is very disturbing that the Queensland Police Service attends to approximately 295 domestic and family violence occurrences per day across this state, resulting in 107,000 incidents per year. That is one every five minutes. This high frequency of reports means that we need to work harder as a community to create awareness of the various forms of domestic and family violence that affect so many lives.

I was honoured to cohost last weekend's Mansfield electorate community event to raise awareness, recognise those lives lost because of domestic and family violence, and raise funds for the Red Rose Foundation. Held at Broadwater Park in Mansfield, locals gathered for a moving service that was led by First Nations women Aunty Norma Boyd and Aunty Cynthia Griffiths. Speakers included: master of ceremonies Craig Zonca from the ABC; Jim Boden, domestic and family violence project officer, Local Government Association of Queensland; the Reverend Peter Judge-Mears; Chaplain Michelle Philp; Carindale Rotarian Annie Stonehouse; and Red Rose Foundation founder and managing director Betty Taylor. An array of musicians provided music throughout the service and included singer/guitarist Jade Stoddart, Mavis and Bruce Williams and the St John's Wishart Musicians.

I would like to sincerely thank Mount Gravatt Rotary Club president Jim Cosgrove for his work and Heather Irvine and Gerry Fitzgerald for their tireless commitment to make the event a huge success. Thank you to event partners and sponsors Mount Gravatt Rotary Club, Carindale Rotary Club, St John's Wishart, the Lovewell Project and Piptree Early Learning at Mount Gravatt East.

The Palaszczuk government continues to invest in many community programs and awareness campaigns to tackle domestic and family violence. The Red Rose Foundation, based in the Mansfield electorate, was the successful recipient of \$149,000 for their online training and support program. I commend Betty and her board for their passion and commitment to end domestic and family violence related deaths. As the member for Mansfield, I will continue to work with my community to provide the necessary support for all who are dealing with the growing scourge of domestic and family violence.

### Glenden


 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.06 pm): Just 123 kilometres from the coast lies the small town of Glenden. Like many other towns in the Bowen Basin, Glenden was, and is, home to people who work in the mining industry. Perhaps that is the problem. The Newlands mine lies about 40 kilometres north-west of Glenden; 30 kilometres to the west is the Byerwen mine. With activity at the Newlands mine winding down and activity at Byerwen ramping up, you would think Glenden would be booming or at least holding its own. Instead, community clubs are closed and crumbling while families and business owners face uncertainty.

The essence of the reason for the uncertainty is a dispute between Glencore, the owner of Newlands, and QCoal, the owner of Byerwen. Both the Isaac Regional Council mayor and I have sought to mediate the dispute, and I thank Mayor Baker for her efforts. When our efforts did not achieve an outcome, Mayor Baker and I sought the assistance of this government. Given the fact that, as I said before, Glenden relies on mining and the resources industry contributes billions of dollars to the Queensland government's coffers, one would think that help would be forthcoming. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Both prior to the last election and since, the Palaszczuk government has done nothing. Despite numerous requests for the Deputy Premier to meet with Mayor Baker and me we are yet to receive any assistance. Perhaps the reason for this ignorance is that we are talking about people who work in, and therefore support, the coalmining industry. Perhaps it is because the residents of Glenden dare to live in regional Queensland rather than the city. Regardless of what industry they choose to work in or where they choose to live, Queenslanders expect their state government to stand up for them when they need it. Queenslanders expect ministers, especially senior ministers like the Deputy Premier, to be prepared to help when Queenslanders face uncertainty. Unfortunately, the Deputy Premier's reluctance to meet with the mayor and me is sending the wrong message to the residents of Glenden in their time of need.

There is still time for action. The people of Glenden are passionate, hardworking Queenslanders who want to continue to contribute to Queensland. They are people who want a future for their families and who want to continue to reside in the community of Glenden. It is a beautiful little town with a very uncertain future. Unless this issue is resolved in the short term, the future of that particular community is at severe risk.

### National Palliative Care Week; Steve the Cat

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.09 pm): This week is National Palliative Care Week. I would like to acknowledge all of the nurses, doctors, physios, speechies, social workers, OTs, chaplains, volunteers, carers and family members who provide support in a palliative care setting. I can tell the House that, as a nurse, palliative care and caring for someone at the end of their life and supporting a family through that time is probably one of the most special things I have experienced. I am sure most other people on that list I just read out feel the same way. You really do need a team of people to achieve it.


I recently did some Palliative Care Queensland professional development courses and there has been a real shift in thinking. For so long, palliative care has been about what you do not want to happen at the end of your life—you do not want pain, you do not want this, you do not want that. What we are starting to focus on now is actually what you do want to happen—how do you want to spend your last moments and time here on earth? That is a great shift.

I have always been a strong palliative care advocate. I want to acknowledge the significant boost in funding from the government for palliative care. There is an area that plays a significant role in terms of end of life and palliative care, and that is the aged-care sector. It is a really big factor. The federal government have had a blueprint laid out for them in terms of the royal commission into aged care and I think the budget shows that they have failed to take heed of that blueprint. Yes, I acknowledge that there has been more money put into the sector, but there really has not been the structural change that many in the sector were looking for. That is really concerning.

We need ratios. We need to make sure that training is improved so that people who are in aged care know how to care for people with end-of-life issues like dementia, poor mobility and swallowing problems. I believe we need nurse practitioners leading the team in aged-care settings. We need to make sure that palliative care is available in all settings—aged care, community care, the home—and is really well integrated with the state systems as well. I do not have time to get onto the My Aged Care system, but it is also another system that is failing people as they grow older. I am proud of what our government has achieved. I call on the federal government to take heed of those things I have pointed out tonight.

In the remaining moments I have left, I want to update the House on the search for Steve the cat that occurred in my electorate. Steve has become a celebrity in the electorate of Greenslopes, and it is a testament to the power of community and social media. Steve went missing well over a month ago and it has been a topic of conversation across many a fence, and I myself have checked out cats walking by to see if they were Steve. I am really pleased to say that Steve has been returned home and is safe and sound after nearly a month away. Well done to our community for coming together and finding Steve. Welcome home, Steve.

### Lockyer Electorate, School Events


 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.12 pm): I believe that for members to be the best they can be they should experience as many things in the community as they can. We all do a lot of serious things but last week I had some great fun with some contemporary learning in our community. I have 35 schools in my community and last week I had the opportunity to go along to a grade 1 Bee-Bot challenge and also Under Eights Day at the Flagstone Creek school.

For those who do not know what a Bee-Bot is, it is a small toy that has got some programming on it that the kids can decorate and tell a story with. At the Laidley school competition, we had schools from Blenheim, Forest Hill, Hatton Vale, Kentville and Laidley. They were telling a story about the National Simultaneous Storytime from the International Space Station where Una went on a journey to explore space and found earth. In one of the challenges, the creativity of these kids was breathtaking as they told the story using the Bee-Bots through the process. I want to thank Alison Seppanen, Lauren McGettigan, Mrs Mac, Karen Pinnell and my fellow judge Yvonne Bidgood. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to experience some contemporary learning that was fun.

Later in the week I went to Under Eights Day at Flagstone Creek. At the school there were more than 100 under-eight students from Flagstone Creek, Lower Tenthill, Withcott and Grantham schools as well as kids from the kindies. It was great to see the friendships and the kids playing together. I actually described it as free-range kids because there was a secure perimeter around the school grounds and the parents who were in attendance were able to supervise their kids in the rural setting. It was a really safe space. It was wonderful to see the kids free-ranging around the school as they went from activity to activity.

I say to our host, Bec Brown, that it was a wonderful and energetic display by your teachers, and you deserve all the accolades. There was face painting, a dinosaur dig, a petting farm as well as a great nature play area. Thanks to the police, the ambos and the local firies who attended the event. They were a hit with the kids. This was the first time at the Flagstone Creek school but it will not be the last. The school has a proud history in the community of bringing kids together and it was a fine example of a thriving community. Those kids will make lifelong friends. I thank Rebecca Brown, Carolyn Evans, Melissa Scanlan, Michele Armit, Fiona Watters, Trena Gaffney, Helen Van Luyn as well as the Flagstone Creek P&C and Shelley Folkard. Thank you so much for the experience. These people are wonderful professionals making learning fun for our kids.

### Logan Electorate, Public Transport


 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (7.15 pm): As members in this House know, I live in a growing area and I am very passionate about connecting the Logan residents with their jobs, schools and families. To do that they need public transport. That is why I recently visited the yard of Logan Coaches in Logan Village to see the brand new and exciting electric buses. The buses that operate on route 587 have a BYD chassis and an Australian-made bus body and seats. It was great to see this new technology delivering near silent operation, great acceleration from the bus stop and no diesel fumes or particulates. In the yard I was able to plug in the double three-phase charger for a total of 44 kilowatts, which was almost as much power as a high-speed DC power station.

The electric bus travels on the brand new route 587, which provides a new TransLink service connecting Yarrabilba and Logan Village to Loganlea station and the whole TransLink network. It is fantastic that you can tap on and go to Loganlea for only \$3.37, or \$1.69 for concession. If you are going through to the CBD, it is \$6.28, or \$3.14 for concession. That is a fantastic way to connect those families to the jobs, services, doctors and everything they need. The other new bus service is route 535 to Flagstone, which comes from Flagstone through Greenbank to Grand Plaza. Again, it only costs \$3.37, or \$1.69 for concession, to get through to Grand Plaza and it also connects to the Greenbank RSL stop.

On top of that, we have done something innovative in Logan. It is often hard to deliver public transport to areas where housing is spaced far apart. I notice the member for Springwood in here who knows this backwards; in fact he was the one who put this innovation in place. We put in place what is called Demand Responsive Transport. Instead of a single bus route, passengers can ring or use the MyDRTLogan app to get the small bus or taxi to come directly to their home. In my area it services the suburbs of Park Ridge, Chambers Flat, Logan Reserve and Munruben and takes people through to the Browns Plains bus station, the Loganlea train station and the Park Ridge shops. People can connect to the services and shopping they need and be able to do that economically. Maybe they share the ride with someone else along the way.

I hear people say, 'Linus, we know you're in a growing area and there are going to be new services,' but we have to remember that under the LNP that is not what happened. There were cuts to the bus services, with almost 2,000 fewer stops a week. We build services for families in growing areas. The LNP cuts them. I will continue to fight for our local area.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Climate Change

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.18 pm): When it comes to climate change, this government seem really scared but it is not the same fear I feel or that I see in my kids' faces or that I heard in the voices of the kids who spoke at last week's climate strike. They are not scared about the crisis unfolding before our eyes—the devastating floods, the catastrophic bushfires, the disappearing islands and the displacement, famine and war that will come with unconstrained global warming.

Labor's fear lies elsewhere. They are scared of upsetting coal and gas donors, they are scared of an unflattering headline in the *Australian*, they are scared to tell the truth to workers and communities reliant on fossil fuels—the truth that change is coming. They are scared because they know they will not even meet their pitiful 50 per cent renewables target by 2030 or net zero emissions by 2050 unless they change tack drastically.


I think they are scared to admit that they were wrong. The best Labor can consistently do on climate change is to accept that the science is real. Great, but there are no prizes for accepting the basic science or for being marginally better than the climate deniers in One Nation and the LNP. How about accepting the findings of the International Energy Agency's report released last week that to reach net zero emissions by 2050 we cannot be approving new coal or gas projects?

Let's unpack that a little bit and start by recognising that the IEA actually exists to support the fossil fuel industry; this is no group of radical climate activists we are talking about. The IEA's starting point for this report is that we need to achieve the global target of net zero emissions by 2050 to give us an even chance of limiting global temperature rise to 1½ degrees Celsius, as the IPCC has told us countless times before. It accepts the current pledges under the Paris Agreement fall well short of what is required to achieve that goal and spells out that to achieve that goal we need no new coal or gas. That should be a massive wake-up call, but the government is still bragging about approving new coalmines and gas fields.

We are now at the point where every new coalmine or gas project approved is a denial of the facts and a betrayal of our children's future. Maybe it is scary to sit down and have that conversation with workers now, and clearly the energy minister thinks so based on the speed with which the Stanwell CEO disappeared after he dared to talk about the early retirement of coal generators. It is even scarier to see this government putting its foot on the accelerator as we careen towards climate collapse with stranded assets and mass unplanned redundancies in a defunct fossil fuel sector.

Change is hard. It can be scary, but it can also bring hope. We have an opportunity now to plan for a Queensland that leads in future industries like renewable energy and green steel and that supports displaced fossil fuel workers with free retraining, guaranteed jobs and housing and other supports for their communities. We will never achieve that future and all that is possible in this state if this government continues to live in fear.

### Mount Larcom Show

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (7.21 pm): I rise this evening to speak about a wonderful reason to visit the Gladstone region, the Mount Larcom Show. The Mount Larcom show is held over two days and this year it will be held on 19 and 20 June. The show is described as the region's favourite agricultural event and simply goes from strength to strength every year. I am proud that I have been invited to open the Mount Larcom Show for the last six years since becoming the state member, and each year they continue to showcase the outstanding event.


The Mount Larcom & District's Show's first event was held in 1919 and it has operated continuously, except for a break due to a little thing called the war and last year due to the pandemic. In 2019 the show celebrated 80 years of presenting the annual agriculture show with 100 years since the first show. The Mount Larcom Show provides the community with a unique friendly atmosphere, providing entertainment with a distinctive country flavour. The Mount Larcom Show is well recognised and respected within the community of Gladstone. It is a family friendly signature regional event that every year attracts a large number of patrons, visitors, participants and exhibitors.

The show provides a great weekend out for the family and a chance for the community to get involved. There is a great range of events to attend over the weekend which includes woodchopping, a ute muster of which I am a proud sponsor, a beef cattle program, horse events and chainsaw racing of all things. With all abilities and every style catered for, there is something for everyone at the friendly show in the Gladstone region. I say congratulations to everyone involved including Mick Wallace, the chairman of the committee, as well as the committee for bringing it all together. It takes a wide range of sponsors, committee members, exhibitors and volunteers to hold this successful event.

The Mount Larcom & District Show Society have recently applied for round 2 of the Queensland bushfires category C flexible funding and they are currently awaiting the outcome of that application. I acknowledge the minister is sitting here. Hopefully we can get that announcement out very shortly. The Mount Larcom & District Show Society has faced some severe disasters including cyclones and an unprecedented firestorm that swept through part of the township and much of the surrounding districts in 2018. I saw firsthand the frightening situations that residents faced and the difficult decisions they had to make in late 2018. There is no doubt that more could be done to strengthen the resilience of this community to ensure they are better prepared and more resilient for natural disasters into the future.

If they are successful for round 2 of the Queensland bushfires category C funding, the Mount Larcom & District Show Society will implement projects aimed at driving recovery and building resilience not only for that community in my electorate but for all Queenslanders impacted by the 2018 bushfires. There is no opportunity greater than the Mount Larcom Show to experience a fantastic and authentic agricultural show.

## Gympie Show

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.24 pm): COVID stopped many community events and activities last year. One casualty was our much loved Gympie Show. As time edged closer, people were on edge in case it was going to be cancelled again due to an outbreak. With a sigh of relief, it was back on. Two weeks ago, Gympie celebrated all that is great about our region's produce, businesses, industries and activities with its 132nd show. Almost 10,000 family and singles tickets were sold, resulting in a massive attendance of more than 17,700 people over three days. Thursday was the elderly and children's day, with more than 100 visitors from several aged-care facilities, and more than 1,500 school students and teachers taking advantage of visiting on the day.


The wide variety of displays, exhibitors, entries and events makes up the wonderful kaleidoscope of our region. Everything was there from machinery alley displays, fire and rescue displays, stud and prime cattle, dairy cattle, state showjumping championships, led and ridden horse classes, harness racing, pig races, poultry, birds, fruit and vegetable displays, animal nursery, miniature ponies to new camel classes in the camel judging and woodchopping. Even my own stand was visited by thousands who collected material and stopped by for a chat. It provided a wonderful opportunity for me to interact with my community.

A show would not exist without the tremendous efforts of volunteers who put in the unpaid, long hours. The show is testament to the work and commitment of the organising committee and the more than 300 people and 30 school students who volunteered their time. They helped run gates and events, man stands, clean up areas, serve people and help organise before, during and after the show.

Our show is the third largest in Queensland, which is a mighty feat considering that there are many larger regional centres and cities. It was officially opened by Tom Grady, who has been a long-time supporter—for the past 40 years. The last year has also brought some sadness with the loss of three great characters and long-time supporters: Pat Nolan, Alain Henderson and Vern Berry. Collectively, they have contributed for decades. It was fitting that a minute's silence was held in recognition of them. Pat founded the iconic Queensland business Nolan Meats, loved Gympie and was a great supporter. Alain Henderson was known as the 'voice of the show' for many years. He was our show's ring announcer for more than 50 years starting in 1964, while Vern Berry was on the ring committee for 25 years.

We all know that show societies have the largest number of volunteers because it is where many fundraising groups, produce and craft societies get together. The Gympie Show was a fitting start to National Volunteers Week.

## Coronavirus, Vaccine

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.27 pm): I am standing tonight to appeal to the residents of Deception Bay, North Lakes, Burpengary East, Rothwell and Mango Hill to go and get their COVID-19 vaccine when it is their turn. It is easy to do. All they need to do is call their GP and book an appointment if they are over 50. They are waiting for them. It is what I have done. I called and when I asked about it they booked me in, no problem. I am off on Tuesday for my first vaccination and I have my second one booked in. It will be the AstraZeneca vaccination and I am happy with that. I say to my constituents that whatever vaccine their doctor offers, they should take it. As Dr Young said, both are very good vaccinations, both have been tested extensively and given the thumbs up by the TGA, one of the best drug regulatory bodies in the world.

I am not waiting until it is too late or we have an outbreak. We have heard in Melbourne today that a lot of people are scrambling to get their vaccinations. People may have felt they had a bit of time to get it, but all of a sudden they realise they need to go and get it now.

One of the reasons I was propelled to get mine was this. A couple of weeks ago I was at a seniors event that the Deputy Premier and I hosted at North Lakes. An older lady fixed me with a stare and asked, 'Have you had your vaccination yet?' I gulped and said, 'No.' She said, 'Well, go and get it done. That is the way we all look after each other.' That is the key: when a person gets their vaccination they are taking responsibility for all the community members around them, whether it be their customers or their workmates. It is the people they come across every day. One of the best ways we can help look after members of our community is to make sure that we ourselves are vaccinated.

If people are over 50 they should call their GP now to make an appointment. To check if they are eligible for their vaccination yet people can go to the eligibility tracker on the QHealth website. People aged 40 to 49 should register their interest on the QHealth website and they can go to a hub when the

hubs open. The Palaszczuk government will open 14 community based hubs—they are smaller than the vaccination centres—throughout the state to administer the Pfizer vaccines to eligible frontline workers. Four are already operational in Central Queensland and the next tranche of hubs will open in July. There will be three more in South-East Queensland in the coming weeks. I am appealing to people in my community to do the right thing by other members of their community, join with me and go and get their vaccination. Do not wait until it is too late.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Weir, Whiting